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P O E M S

BY

JOHN NICHOLSON,

THE AIREDALE POET;

WITH

A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS

BY

JOHN JAMES,

AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF BRADFORD."

LONDON:

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LIFE OF JOHN NICHOLSON.

IN every walk of life misfortunes are strewed thickly around, but in the lives of men of genius, in each department of literature and science, they have greatly abounded. The poetic race, in particular, appear to be doomed to a state of misery; for their calamities have in all ages been proverbial. If the mantle of Elijah fall upon one of the inspired, it seems also inseparable from the lot of dwelling by the brook Cherith. The lives of the poets may in general be summed up as comprising every species of human woe; and the blanket of Boyse, the loaf of Otway, the glass house lodgings of Savage, and the poison cup of Chatterton, are merely some of the more prominent incidents in the sad history of the poets of our own country. Nor have the bards of other lands been more fortunate.

The reason of this almost universal wretchedness attendant upon poetic pursuits seems evident. For the possessors of poetic genius being ever of strong passions, ardent imagination, and exquisite sensibility, which indeed seems the first requisite of a poet, are naturally disposed to indulge in day dreams of gay hope, and disregard, until too late, the stern monitions

of prudence. They consider the world as a garden of Eden blooming with roses, and find it, too late, a waste of briars. Genius has also, along with its noble attributes, concomitant failings; and like its type, the great and glorious luminary of heaven, the stronger its power the more clouds it draws around it from this lower world. High aspirations, sanguine hopes, are supplanted by the severe realities of life; and the disappointed bard too often droops through life neglected and in poverty,—a prey to the gloomiest melancholy, or of reckless dissipation and despair.

“ ’Tis his, to fall from Inspiration’s heaven,
And feel the wretchedness that has no name;
His, to be often blam’d—less oft forgiven;
His, frequent penury, and not seldom—shame;
His, fierce extremes of glory and of gloom,—
Perchance an early fame—too oft, an earlier tomb.”

But if by his constitution and feelings the poet is peculiarly exposed to the blasts of this boisterous stage, he alone is truly alive to the great beauties of the physical and intellectual world. He has, in the sunny moments of his existence, a heaven within him which passes the understanding of the vulgar sons of men; and his exquisite sensibility gives a tenfold zest to the charms of nature and society, and adds additional grace to every pleasing scene of life.

Among those of the uneducated poets who tasted deeply of the cup of misery may be ranked John Nicholson.

He was born at Weardley, a hamlet in the parish of Harewood, in this county, on the 29th day of November, 1790. His father, Thomas Nicholson, having

married the daughter of a farmer at Eldwick, near Bingley, removed thither when his son was only a few weeks old.

The first rudiments of education were taught him by his father at the wool-sorting board; and afterwards he was sent to school to a person named Brigg, who for lack of a sufficient livelihood from the occupation of school-master, united with it that of besom-maker. The school-house, forming during the season a shooting-house, was seated on the very summit of the wild mountain tract of Romalds Moor, which stretching from Skipton eastwards sixteen miles, divides Airedale from Wharfedale. Here on summer afternoons, amidst the smell of wild flowers and the whirling boom of the mountain bee, the besom-maker, like a peripatetic philosopher, led forth his little band of scholars, to teach them lessons while they pulled the blooming ling for his besoms, which he sold in the surrounding villages on the Saturday holidays. Under this rustic schoolmaster, who possessed, notwithstanding his humble station, considerable scholastic attainments, and above all the happy art of communicating them to his scholars, young Nicholson made a remarkably rapid progress.

After remaining with the Romalds Moor schoolmaster a few years, he was sent to Bingley Free Grammar School, then in high repute, and taught by the late amiable and learned Dr. Hartley. He only remained about a year at this school, during which time he had, by attention and good behaviour, obtained the favour of the master, who afterwards, with his characteristic kindness, revised the "Airedale" and other early poems

of our poet, and assisted him on many occasions through life.

On leaving Bingley School, Nicholson's father, a worsted manufacturer, destining him for the business, as a preliminary step, put him to the sorting of wool. The pursuits of poetry, and an unsettled mind, prevented him ever becoming a manufacturer, or commencing business for himself, and he remained all the days of after life either a journeyman woolcomber or sorter.

During youth he had, like all men of vigorous and active minds, a strong inclination to reading, and perused with avidity every book which fell in his way. His favourite authors were Pope's Homer, Shakspeare, and Young's Night Thoughts. The former he incessantly read, and had a considerable portion of it by memory. To the love of Homer may be imputed the partiality he evinced through after life to battle scenes. In a long poem of his, "The Lyre of Ebor," not published in the following collection, the whole of the battles which have been fought in this county are vividly described. He was a great admirer, through life, of the terrible and sublime; and these three authors suited his taste in that respect.

Whatever plausible reasons may be advanced to the contrary, experience fully shews that long indulgence in the pleasures of poetry, or the graces of polite literature, unfits for the drudgery of menial occupations:—

"Where once those fairies dance no grass doth ever grow."

Such effect had also the pleasures of poetry upon young Nicholson. When he grew up, his parents found that the love of reading greatly interfered with the set duties in the wool warehouse; for he was in the habit of pro-

longing the studies of the night to an early hour in the morning, and thus rendering himself unable to resume wool-sorting at the wonted hour. To correct this habit, alike prejudicial to health and fortune, his indulgent mother carefully concealed from him candles : but an ardent desire for knowledge who can restrain? He by one of those expedients to which men of genius, struggling to the goal against adverse circumstances, have often had recourse, contrived to evade her intentions ; for having access to the olive oil with which combers prepare their wool, he, by dipping a twisted cotton rag in an old mustard pot filled with oil, and thus making it subserve the purpose of a lamp, studied through the night, when the rest of the family were asleep.

Nor was he too industrious during the day, if an opportunity occurred for him to steal to his pleasant reading. On the set days when his father was customarily absent from home on business, he wandered with some favourite author in hand, among the romantic dells of Eldwick, or the mountain waste of Romalds Moor, and

“ Amid the broom he bask’d him on the ground,
Where the wild thyme and camomile are found :
There would he linger, till the latest ray
Of light sat trembling on the welkin’s bound ;
Then homeward through the twilight shadows stray,
Sauntering and slow.”

“ So had he passed many a day,” often careless of food or the allurements of the world, and only intent upon the ten thousand bright reveries that filled his mind.

There is no spot in Yorkshire better fitted to bring forth, and nurture, poetic ideas than Eldwick with its neighbourhood, for it embraces every variety of lowland

and mountain scenery. The effect of pure mountain air in invigorating the intellect, and producing noble and exalted sentiments, is well established.

He had during the earliest periods of youth indulged in rhyme, but none of his poetical efforts at that period have escaped oblivion.

The connexion between music and poetry is obvious, and he who is deeply touched by the one is by the other. He was an enthusiastic admirer of sweet sounds, and early in life learned to perform on the hautboy. With characteristic energy and enthusiasm he has often been known to travel to Leeds, a distance of sixteen miles, for the sole purpose of purchasing a reed for his favourite instrument. One of his amusements was to proceed on a Sunday morning to the heath, and play some divine melody. His performances, however, on the hautboy were not always so harmless in their tendency, but sometimes led him into riotous company, and awkward scrapes. To music he was indebted for his first wife. Being engaged in playing at a wedding party, he met her there, and before he was twenty years of age, or had any experience of the world, married. She died soon after, leaving him a child.

He now became religious even to austerity, and as an earnest of his intention to cast away the vanities of the world, buried on Romalds Moor the hautboy, where it remains. Nicholson's parents were of the persuasion of Wesleyans, and having joined their society, and possessing considerable fluency of speech, he was soon enrolled among the Methodist local preachers. His "outpourings" are still well remembered for their energy, and the number of poetical quotations from Blair and Young with which they were interspersed. It is

to be hoped that his hearers still have impressed upon their memory the tremendous sentences which he had culled from the "Last Judgment" of Young.

Nicholson's union with the Methodists was not of long continuance, and the cause of separation from them leaves no stain upon his memory. He left their society never to return.

In the mean time he had taken to himself another wife. He married Martha Wild, of Bingley, in 1813. Through all the changes of his fitful and unhappy life, in evil report and good report, in sickness and in health, 'Pat,' as he was wont familiarly to call her, continued the comforter of his adversity, and the cheerer of his desponding moments. She survives him only to lament his loss, and while deploring the habits which rendered her union with him unpropitious, cherishes with the deepest respect his memory.

At the time of his second marriage he resided at Bingley, but shortly after went to Eldwick, and was employed about three years in the warehouse of his father, who then, as throughout life, used every means to forward the fortune of his son.

In 1818, he came to reside at Red Beek, and worked at Shipley Fields mill, and while here he wrote the first piece which has escaped forgetfulness. It was a sarcastic composition relating to a physician in Bradford; and as the subject was a popular one, brought the author into repute in this neighbourhood.

The period during which he dwelt at Red Beek (five years) was indeed the summer day of his life, for he was in the receipt of good wages, had only a small family, and was surrounded by intellectual and staunch friends. Among his particular acquaintance, he could boast of

several artists resident in Bradford, who have since greatly distinguished themselves in the fine arts. One of these friends, Mr. Geller, has not forgotten after long separation—nay, the separation of death—his intimacy with the poet at this time, but has many delightful reminiscences of hours spent with him.

His poetical ability also brought him into contact with a party of players, who were, under the management of a Mr. Thompson, performing in Bradford old theatre. At their urgent entreaty, he was induced, though a stranger to dramatic composition, or the laws on which it is based, to write a piece of three acts, termed the “Robber of the Alps.” It was so well received that he was prevailed upon to try his powers in the same department of literature again, and produced the “Siege of Bradford,” founded on the events of the Civil War, which was acted for the benefit of Mr. Macauley, one of the players, and yielded the sum of £47. Nicholson had been led to believe that he would share in the profits of this last piece, but never received a farthing from its being acted. It was, however, printed, and ran through two editions. This was the first of his printed pieces.

The fame of Nicholson was now in this locality great. He had fairly launched into poetic pursuits, and henceforward his whole mind was devoted to them.

In the year 1822, he removed to Harden Beck, a small knot of houses near Bingley. Elated with the success of his first publication, he began to contemplate another work, and finally fixed upon “Airedale.” While engaged in this task, a circumstance happened which, doubtless, determined his lot as a poet. He had ever been remarkable for impromptu verse making,

and one day, J. G. Horsfall, Esq., who resided in the vicinity, passing the poet's house, requested a drink of water, when he was obligingly handed a draught of beer. Mr. Horsfall, in a jocose manner, said, "Nicholson, they state you are a poet, let us hear what you can say about this pot of beer," when without premeditation he improvised the following :—

"O for an everlasting spring
Of home-brew'd drink like this !
Then with my friends I'd laugh and sing,
And spend the hours in bliss ;
Then come old Care, link'd with Despair,
For I, with thee made strong,
Would plunge them over head in beer,
And make them lead the song."

Mr. Horsfall was so much pleased with this prompt effusion, that from that time he encouraged Nicholson to pursue his poetical labours, and bestowed on him many substantial marks of patronage.

Under these auspicious circumstances, he proceeded to complete "Airedale." While composing the greater part he did not follow his daily occupation, but was enabled, through the labours of his wife at a worsted mill, and the generous assistance of Mr. Horsfall, to devote a considerable portion of time to the composition of "Airedale," and many of the short pieces which first appeared with it. But several of the sweetest of the lyrics which appear in the following pages were produced at the sorting-board, and dotted down on its greasy surface with a skewer. Most of my readers will know that the labours of a woolsorter are congenial to habits of thought and meditation.

The mode of study he pursued after the hours of

work was characteristic. While engaged on a poem containing sombre or sublime thoughts, he loved to stroll late at night on the banks of the babbling rivulet which ran close to his dwelling; and while the moon, "sweet regent of the sky," shed her mild rays on the spot, study his subject. A small picturesque cascade, in a dell near Goit Stock, is pointed out as a favourite resort of our poet while ruminating on the topics of many of his choicest poems. Several of them of a gay and cheerful nature were written early in the morning, especially "Lines written at Goit Stock," "A Morning in May," and "Return of the Swallow." In summer he generally rose at four o'clock, and strayed to his accustomed spot for poetic contemplation and expression.—a huge flat rock which overlooks the pleasant valley at Harden Beck.

His life at this time was one of industry, for if not engaged at the sorting-board, he was earnestly employed in poetic composition or reading. He had hitherto been a sober steady workman, distinguished only by superior mental attainments and lofty sentiment.

After the completion of "Airedale," he removed to Hewnden Mill, (about a mile distant from his former residence,) and was there employed three years, as a woolsorter, by Mr. Stephen Skirrow. While at this place he wrote "The Poacher." All the incidents in the piece, with exception of one, in which the principal hero is at last drowned, were faithfully drawn from real life. At that time, a daring and desperate band of poachers resided in the neighbourhood; and Mr. Horsfall having suggested the subject of "The Poacher," he commenced obtaining materials for the work by frequenting the company of poachers. Upon

treating them liberally with liquor, they furnished him with full particulars of their modes of catching game and poaching exploits. He was accustomed to sit up whole nights with them for this purpose; and they have been known to dispatch at one sitting a couple of gallons of the poet's home-brewed beer. Two persons of the names of Jack Moore and Dan Ingham stood for the pictures of Ignotus and Desparo. I lately met with the latter near Hewnden Mill, and casually asked him how much game he had bagged as a poacher in his life; he answered, with the most innocent simplicity, "As much as that mill," pointing to it, "would hold if well packed." He has been fined some forty times for poaching, and been several times in the House of Correction for not paying the fines imposed upon him. From these men Nicholson readily obtained materials for the composition of "The Poacher." He wrote the Poacher's Song previous to the other parts, and in the intervals of their narration of poaching adventures and stratagems, it was sung by Desparo and Ignotus with great glee over the poet's thin home-brewed, or the more potent liquor of the neighbouring public house. The Song is still a favorite in the neighbourhood, and there are scores who, to the tune of the Farmer's Boy, exhibit its lyric excellence to the best advantage.

Having now completed the manuscript for his first volume of poems, and having obtained a numerous list of subscribers, he committed the work to the press in 1824. Although unversed in the strict rules of composition, yet it may once for all be mentioned, that, with the exception of a few grammatical inaccuracies or verbal alterations, the work was altogether the fruit of

A second edition was struck off in 1825, and our unfortunate author again started as a vender of his works. He had now contracted inveterate habits of dissipation, which he never afterwards shook off, but proved the bane and curse of his life. His claim to a high rank among the uneducated poets of the country was fully proved, and he at this time was widely patronized, and received substantial favours from the great. Had he possessed the least foresight or prudence, the produce of the poems, and the presents he received in this the heyday of his popularity, might have secured him a moderate competency for life: but regardless of the entreaties and endeavours of friends, especially of J. G. Horsfall, Esq., he riotously wasted his money among bacchanalian companions, and seldom returned from book-vending excursions with a penny in his pocket.

Having disposed of the greater portion of the second edition of the first volume of poems, he began to prepare for the publication of another volume: and in the intervals of his wanderings wrote the "Lyre of Ebor," and the other pieces which form the second volume of poems published by him. These in all the requisites of genuine poetry, are much inferior to the poems which appeared in the first volume. He had indeed from intemperate habits lost much of his former energy and delicacy of thought. The tenor of his life was now unsuited to poetic exertion. He had become nerveless, and a prey to all the evils of intemperance.

Early in 1827 the "Lyre of Ebor and other Poems" appeared. He was then resident at Bingley, and had not worked at his trade for three years. In this interval the trade panic had occurred, which made employment in wool-sorting not easily obtained. The evils of

poverty now stole swiftly upon him. His family had increased to six children, and the improvidence of his conduct had not abated, but rather increased.

While on a visit to the lakes of Cumberland, he became acquainted with the steward of George Lane Fox, Esq., of Bramham, who recommended Nicholson to the notice of that gentleman, who, being pleased with the perusal of Nicholson's poems, and hearing of his distress, with characteristic generosity gave the poet twenty pounds: and ever afterwards he was welcome to the hospitalities at Bramham Park. There he often quaffed the contents in strong beer of a horn, holding about three pints, called "Long Tom." The clever lines to "Long Tom" were written while under the inspiration of this bacchanalian horn. But Mr. Fox's kindness to the poet did not stop here, for at various times he presented him with money, to the amount of more than £100; and after his death has befriended his widow, and promoted in a manner never to be forgotten by the poet's family, the success of this publication.

But who shall assist him who is recklessly determined not to be assisted? Nicholson, after receiving Mr. Fox's handsome present, immediately determined to visit the great metropolis; and leaving four pounds for the maintenance of his family, departed in October, 1827, with the rest of the money to London, taking with him a large stock of books. Here he was introduced to the late Dr. Birkbeck by Mr. Richard Nichols, brother in law to his late master, Mr. Skirrow. The Dr. treated him with his accustomed urbanity, and gave him introductions to a large circle of acquaintance, among whom Nicholson found numerous purchasers of his volumes.

The Yorkshire poet, no doubt, cut a picturesque figure in London society; for he was dressed in a blue coat, corduroy breeches, and grey yarn stockings, with a head of hair that had not been touched with a comb for a twelve-month. During his stay in London, a period of three weeks, he sold a large number of his books, and was treated generously by many friends. Through their kindness he was enabled to visit every place in the metropolis worthy of note. He was particularly gratified by a visit to Chantrey's works, at Pimlico. Not knowing Chantrey's person, he observed to a bystander, while viewing the bust of His Majesty George the Fourth, "What merit does! The artist is not now selling milk in Sheffield." It turned out afterwards that the person he so addressed was Chantrey himself. After enjoying a long conversation with Allan Cunningham, Nicholson departed not knowing that he had been in company with the great sculptor. Upon being informed, he sent to Chantrey an apology in verse for the error.

While in London, a bust of the poet in plaster of Paris was taken by one of Chantrey's workmen, which is in the possession of the poet's family, and conveys an admirable likeness of him.

His stay in London was at last shortened by an untoward but laughable affair. Having gained the acquaintance of a barrister from Yorkshire, he was introduced to a number of gentlemen of gay habits, who lounged away their time in the cloisters of the Inner Temple. They were delighted with the rustic uncouth appearance, eccentric conduct, and witty sayings of the Yorkshire poet; and he was induced, morning by morning, to partake of refreshment in their

chambers. On the 15th of November the refreshment of the morning was prolonged the whole day, which was spent by these gentlemen of the bar, well assisted by the poet, riotously drinking wine. In the evening they proposed that he should proceed with them to Drury Lane theatre, to witness the performance of the opera of Artaxerxes. His friends paid for him at the dress-boxes and then took him into the saloon, where either intentionally or through inadvertence, they left him. His odd dress, uncouth gesticulations, and apostrophes to Shakspeare, soon collected round him a number of cyprians and their beaux, who having never seen such a grotesque figure before in the place, were inclined to extreme merriment at his expense. A great uproar was the consequence, and Bond, the officer on duty at the theatre, took Nicholson, after a severe struggle, to Covent Garden watch-house.

As he had committed no offence, except apostrophizing a bust of Shakspeare, the officer after awhile offered to set him at large ; he would not, however, be so released, but demanded a hearing before the magistrate. Accordingly in the morning he was brought before Sir Richard Birnie, who on hearing all the circumstances, and laughing heartily, discharged him, but not before the poet, in shewing the magistrate how rudely he was treated by the officer on dragging him from the theatre, had shaken Bond very roughly and pulled him round the office. When he had just quitted Bow-street office he met his friend the Barrister, who having been informed of the misadventure was coming to his aid. As will readily be supposed, the scene at Bow-street was graphically sketched by the ready pen of the short-hand writers, and reports of it, dressed

up with the usual condiments, appeared in all the daily papers, duly headed "The Yorkshire Poet in trouble." Knowing well that his wife, upon hearing through the newspapers that he had been imprisoned, would instantly proceed to the metropolis, without further delay he quitted it for home. On arriving at Bingley, a single halfpenny was the sole remnant of the £17, and the money he had obtained by book-selling in London.

Whatever opinion he had formed of London previous to the adventure at Bow-street office, it was afterwards far from favourable. In a pamphlet he published soon after his return, giving an account, in prose, of this journey, he depicts the city in dark colours, and makes a contrast between it and his favourite Romalds Moor, much to the advantage of the latter. He adds, "If peace is to be found, 'tis in the cottage of the peasant, where neighbours and friends meet, reading the Bible after returning from church, and then with honest devotion retiring to rest. This I have seen under the wild mountains of Romalds Moor." Throughout the pamphlet many original and striking observations are scattered. One I shall transcribe, because it forms the best excuse for the inveterate habit of intemperance he contracted. After moralising on the infirmities and calamities of poets, he proceeds, "Walk to their monuments, and see their ages at death. Could they speak and disclose what they had felt, even the most enthusiastic admirers of their works could they become superior to them all in point of genius, would shrink from the overwhelming anxiety and woe that too oft cuts short a poet's life. The public answer, they should not drink; but of the very persons who are advising

them, the next sentence is—come, take a single glass with me, a single glass cannot hurt you. The poet refuses—again is pressed; he knows it hurts him, but is afraid to disoblige his friend—he is a subscriber;—points out the beauties, the defects, &c., of the work. The next gentleman he meets with does the same: perhaps another enters—another glass is the consequence; the poet's heart warms—forgets his constitution—till in a few years, like lime with water, he falls away and drops into the earth."

"Clords that bring the sweetest measure
Trill the deepest notes of woe."

A letter which he sent to a distinguished friend, shews very vividly the state of mind and feelings of our poet at this time, and elucidates some passages in his life. He writes, "Days, weeks, and months pass away, and adversity and the rhymers have become familiar. At the beginning I cringed and bowed to every blast of misfortune, but my mind has at last strengthened, and I meet the storms of life with a kind of despairing resolution. I am sat in my cottage this morning, and praised be the Giver of every gift, we have not a want but this day is supplied;—all in good health, and a few pounds to spare. I have been for some time back safely at anchor with my father, whom I shall ever respect, and if ever I can repay him I will. I cannot reflect with pleasure on the quantities of stimulus I have lately swallowed. I felt my own bosom, and thought it was giving way under the accumulated load of anxiety. I was afraid of the lunatic asylum. You smile at this, but consider hopes flying among the stars——* * * I cannot help thinking if I have good conduct, and sell all my present

works, that I can write something better than I have ever yet written. This may be vanity; but I know one thing, I have been greatly deficient in reading, and have accidentally hit upon some lines very like those of others, which the public may think I have borrowed, but which are in reality my own. After my compositions were put together, I never could either write new in their place or correct the old, for the anxiety which pressed on my mind smothered invention. I have just read the introduction to Clare's poems. What have I had to suffer, compared to what he had! 'Tis true my family have been more numerous; but then I have had more friends. When he, poor man! had worked hard for his twenty shillings to pay for three hundred copies of a very humble prospectus, and when they were all distributed, what was the number of subscribers? Seven!!! Only seven. Oh! what must he have felt! He had no one to whom he could unbosom his mind, at least who had any influence. I sadly want to know my fate; but if my works should clear me forty or fifty pounds, I would be well dressed, take a day when I thought, and scribble over another poem. You will say, What, not tired yet! No, sir; I know I can leave my children no other legacy than a volume of trifles, if they can find a real friend to publish them. I will tell you what I am afraid of—many will compare my works with those who have had far greater privileges, and then they will be found wanting."

The disappointment he experienced on the first visit to the metropolis did not prevent him, after the lapse of a few months, wishing to try his fortune there again. He believed that London was the great mart for the

works he had published, and that he had not used proper means to bring them before the metropolitan public. 'Pat,' having sufficient evidence of the fruits which might be expected from the intended journey, used every persuasion to deter him, but in vain. She therefore determined to be a partner in the trip, and endeavour, if possible, to bring home some portion of the money which the sale of his works would, during their absence, produce. Being aware she would prove a great check on his excesses, he endeavoured to escape from her, but failed; and after a laughable journey, they reached the metropolis in the Spring of 1828. All his former friends received him with marks of kindness; and he even became intimate with Bond, the officer who took him into custody when before in town.

The five weeks he remained in London this second time were marked by none of the eccentric conduct or excesses of the former. While there, he buried a favorite infant child, and wrote on the occasion some verses which were printed in the *Morning Advertiser*, accompanied with flattering remarks on the poetical ability of the author. During his stay in the metropolis he obtained, through the kind offices of Mr. Nichols and the intercession of Dr. Birkbeck, a grant of ten pounds from that meritorious institution, the *Literary Fund Society*. The money was not, on account of his notorious improvidence, given to him; but on his return to the country sent to a friend over whom he had no control, with directions to disburse it to the best advantage of our poet. A full suit of clothes was provided for him out of the donation, and several little debts he owed were paid. At this period, and during the remainder of his life, he was remarkably

slovenly in dress and general appearance. Except Sundays, he invariably wore from rising in the morning to bed-time the usual woollsorter's checked brat, which covers the whole body. He was so careless respecting clothes, that he was never known to go from home with a great coat but left or lost it. Though so inattentive to dress in the latter portion of life, he was, in early years, quite a martinet in that article.

When he returned home, that kind-hearted and generous man, Dr. Birkbeck, (Peace be with his manes!) spontaneously presented Nicholson's wife with four pounds, besides having on other occasions given him considerable sums.

The demand for his works in the metropolis was, compared with that in the country, not so large as he had been led to expect; indeed it could not be supposed, except by the most inexperienced, that a poet, unknown to "fortune or to fame," would at once attract notice in that great arena of literature. The Yorkshire newspapers had, by favourable notices of his publications, greatly assisted the sale of them in this district. James Montgomery, Esq., a poet of great merit, edited at this period the *Sheffield Iris*, a paper of wide circulation, and penned a most flattering review of "*Airedale, &c.*" As a consequence, Nicholson sold more copies of the work in Sheffield than in any other town. Mr. Montgomery also wrote a letter to him, in which, with the true generosity of genius, he bestowed great praise on Nicholson's poetical powers. This letter he greatly prized, as coming from so high an authority, and being printed in the local papers, contributed much to spread his fame.

He numbered among his patrons the late Earl of

Harewood and Lord Ribblesdale, and from both received considerable pecuniary gifts. There are several anecdotes related of the kind condescension both these amiable noblemen shewed to Nicholson. He was ever a welcome guest at their mansions, and never returned from them without having partaken largely of the owners' hospitality. The late Lord Ribblesdale was an amateur artist, and a painting by him, which Nicholson begged, is now in the possession of his family, and was highly valued by him on account of the noble giver. He frequently presented our poet with trifling articles of dress from his own person, such as silk handkerchiefs. Tong Hall was another place which he often visited; and here, and Bramham Park (as before alluded to), were the spots he most loved. With very rare exceptions, he seldom brought any portion of the largess presented to him by his distinguished friends home, but squandered it away. One of them once wrapped up a sovereign in the corner of his neckerchief, with a strict injunction to carry it to his family. He promised to do so, and performed the severe task of travelling many miles with such a sum of money without spending it.

A circumstance now occurred which put an end to his book-selling journeys. The person who had printed and published for him became insolvent, and on an execution being levied on his goods, a large stock of Nicholson's publications were seized. In vain he remonstrated against this proceeding, and shewed that he had purchased the paper on which these publications were printed. During several days they were offered for sale by the hammer,—realising about half their value. Nicholson did not quietly submit to the in-

justice: he came to Bradford and pulled the auctioneer from his stand while selling the works. The sale, however, was so great that compositors were employed to set some of them in type, and they were sold wet from the press. Henceforward the demand for them in this quarter was glutted, and the source whence Nicholson had for some years drawn the main portion of his supplies, cut off.

No other resource now remained besides his trade; but employment in wool-sorting was not easily obtained, and he was obliged to earn a livelihood by the laborious and ill-recompensed occupation of wool-combing.

He removed from Bingley to Bradford in 1833, and here remained during the remainder of his life. For a period of nearly ten years he obtained employment in the warehouse of Mr. Titus Salt, who to his honour retained him when very few masters would have suffered the annoyance of his broken and disjointed labours. During the first few years he resided in Bradford he was in easier circumstances than he had been for some years previous. Several of his family had now arrived at an age when they were able, by working at the staple manufactures of Bradford, not only to sustain themselves, but oft, too oft, when their father neglected to bring home the earnings of the week, supported the whole of the household. He had the advantages of having industrious and affectionate children, who, if he had been unable to work, would cheerfully have laboured for his maintenance, and were ever ready to sacrifice their own ease to his happiness.

In 1836 he became a convert to temperance principles, or to speak more properly, put them in practice; for it cannot be doubted that the heart-aches, bitter

reflections, and woe, he had brought upon himself and others near and dear to him, taught him years before the folly of his conduct. The advocates of temperance were numerous in the neighbourhood of Wilsden, and published an unique collection of poetical pieces in favour of their views. "The Drunkard's Retribution," in the following pages, was thus published. After abstaining from intoxicating drinks for seventeen weeks, alas! he returned to the old path of ruin and disgrace.

While at Bradford he was engaged by Mr. Richard Oastler, then in the zenith of popularity as an advocate of the rights of factory children, to write a poem depicting their sufferings and urging their claims upon the philanthropist. He remained at Fixby Hall, during the composition of this piece, two or three weeks. After it was published the poet and his patron disagreed.

Nicholson's claim upon the Literary Fund Society was again urged in 1837. E. C. Lister, Esq., M. P. for Bradford, having been requested to apply to the Society, exerted himself in our poet's behalf, and finally another ten pounds was presented to him. It must be mentioned that Mr. Geller greatly assisted in obtaining this last donation.

The remaining portion of Nicholson's sad history is soon narrated. His life was henceforward a chequered scene of labour one day, and reckless conduct the next. He never gave up the pleasure of composing poetry; and at intervals wrote 'A Description of the Low-Moor Iron-Works,' 'A Walk from Knaresborough to Harrogate,' and other pieces, some of which are of considerable length and were published. It was evident, however,

that he had lost a considerable portion of the inspiration which he formerly possessed. One of these, however, 'England's Lament for the Loss of her Constitution,' written at the time of the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act, and predicting that it would only tend to increase the demands of the party it was intended to satisfy, contains passages of great power. He wrote also in verse against the Socialists and Chartists, who were, with the great Agitator of Ireland, the especial objects of his hatred. A few short poems which he wrote in the latter portion of his life (inserted in the present collection) are worthy of his best days. Immediately preceding his death, he commenced a poem on the Affghanistan war. I have the fragment before me; it was written in blue ink, with a ling stalk, as a substitute for a pen.

We now approach the time of his melancholy end. On holidays he almost invariably retraced the footsteps of youth on the wilds of Eldwick. It was a common saying of his on such occasions—"I'll be off to Eldwick, to breathe a little mountain air, and get my throat cleansed from the smoke of Bradford," and he usually started thither the night previous to the holiday. The evening before Good Friday, April 13th, 1843, he left Bradford for the purpose of visiting his aunt at Eldwick, and called at several places on the road. When he left Shipley time was fast approaching midnight. He was observed to proceed up the bank of the canal in the direction of Dixon Mill, and at this place it seems attempted to cross the river Aire by means of the stepping-stones there, so as to take the most direct course to Eldwick. The night was dark and stormy, and the river swollen. It is conjectured that in en-

deavouring to cross the stepping-stones, and on reaching the farther part of the river, he missed his footing and fell into the current, which runs deep and impetuously at that point. From the appearance of the place next morning, he had been carried away eight or ten yards, where he caught hold of some hazel boughs, and by a great effort got out of the water. The marks of the wool-sorter's brat he wore, were visible on the side of the bank, which is steep. It must have required great presence of mind and physical strength to enable him to extricate himself out of the river. Afterwards he had crept on his hands and knees through a hole in the hedge which fences off the river, a part of his coat being found in the hole. Exhausted and benumbed he lay here until about six in the morning, when a half-witted fellow passing near heard him groan and saw him rise into a sitting posture. The man was terrified, and without rendering any assistance hastened to the farm-house whither he was going for milk,—did not mention the circumstance there, and returned another way home. There is no question that Nicholson's life would have been saved had this person either rendered assistance or stated at the farm-house what he had seen. Two hours after, the poor poet was seen by a farm-labourer who was proceeding to his work, and upon calling out and receiving no answer, he without further investigation ran to inform his master at Baildon, who instantly returned with him to the place, where they found Nicholson dead; but life had only been extinct a short time, as he was quite warm.

The dead man being removed to the Bay Horse Inn, Baildon, a medical gentleman quickly attended, who

pronounced death to have been caused by apoplexy, owing to the body having been long exposed to water and cold. The coroner at his inquest on the body recorded a verdict in conformity with the opinion of the surgeon.

On Tuesday, the 18th, Nicholson's remains were deposited in Bingley church-yard. A large concourse of people out of respect to his memory met the corpse on the way, and at the burial a thousand persons at the least were present: a full choir joined in the sublime burial service of the Church of England; and a mourning peal was rung.

He left his wife with eight children, two of them of tender age. The desire he expressed in the letter before quoted has been fulfilled. Several 'real' friends have been found to publish the legacy of trifles he has left to his children.

The portrait of Nicholson, by Mr. Geller of London, and which he has with characteristic generosity presented gratuitously for this work, conveys a faithful representation of the features of the original. He was at the time the portrait was taken forty years of age, and time and intemperance had not made much havoc in his look or constitution. There are some points which the burnisher of the artist could not bring out. Our poet was of a very ruddy complexion, with a dark brown eye, in which fire seemed to roll at the bottom. His eye and massy overshadowing brow were the only indexes in his countenance of the intellectual power he possessed. He was about five feet ten inches in height, of robust make, broad shouldered, and rather stooped.

In disposition he was kind-hearted, frank, and with-

out deceit. The words of Churchill may most happily be applied to him, for he was truly

“Foe to restraint, unpractised in deceit,
Too resolute from nature’s active heat
To brook affronts, and tamely pass them by;
Too proud to flatter, too sincere to lie.”

His great and sole vice was intemperance. Without partiality it may be said that he had no other. In the train of drunkenness often follows a host of attendant sins, such as lewdness, profanity, lying, evil speaking. Of these he was guiltless. As was written of another frail son of genius, in allusion to his besetting sin—
“Oh! call it not vice, it might be but woe.” So may it of Nicholson, for when in the most distress or stung in soul, he endeavoured to drown his cares in oblivion’s cup. Nicholson’s brother Thomas, who is most intimately acquainted with all particulars in the life of our poet, states that for years before his death a couple of glasses of ale were sufficient to make him tipsy, and exhibit symptoms which rendered it probable that insanity would close his course. When under the influence of intoxicating liquor, he seldom misbehaved in any other manner than raving in poetry.

How irreconcilable are the ways of man! At the time of his worst conduct he was deeply impressed with religious precepts, and took great care to instil them into the minds of his children. On Sundays he delighted to read the sublime passages in the prophets, and was wont to declare they were the perfection of mighty poetry. In the better moments of life he was sincerely devout.

Few men in the same lowly station of life had more sincere well-wishers and admirers. There are indeed

to be found thickly scattered through the mass of society, men who gloat with envious pleasure upon any failing which the sons of genius may possess, or which all the arts of hell can, if possible, impute to them, though without foundation. These shooters in the dark of slander's arrows conceive that whatever lowers those favoured in intellect or the gifts of fortune, elevates, in comparison, these vile detractors. That Nicholson had many such enemies, who were glad that by his conduct he somewhat lowered himself to their own mean level, there is no doubt.

Reader! if within thee glows the purest fire of heaven; if thou art distinguished among men for mighty genius or mental attainments; if thou have many sincere and influential friends, and the gifts of fortune are within thy power, let the life of poor Nicholson serve in part as a beacon to shew that all these will not compensate for the want of prudence and good conduct, but will rather hasten thy passage to disappointment, tribulation, and certain woe. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

In reading Nicholson's poetry, the man of taste and judgment will often find blemishes which are peculiar to the compositions of uneducated poets. It must always, however, be borne in mind that he laboured under all the disadvantages in writing which arise from want of education. It would be highly unjust to judge of his works as compared with those of our polished and educated poets, who have fortunately been able to give a high finish to their productions. The best apology for the imperfections of his works is to be

found in the preface to "Airedale." He there observes, "The volume deprecates the severity of criticism, and claims that indulgence which the author is confident would be extended to him, were the circumstances known under which it has been written. The truth is, that it is the production of one self-taught, and living from his childhood on the edge of a wild uncultivated moor—the rocks his summers' evenings' study, and a few borrowed books his sole companions—destined to labour for the support of a numerous family—deprived of all intercourse with the literary world, and even destitute of knowing what passes in it." Although his education was so scanty, yet, like the class of operatives to which he belonged, his mind was stored with much general knowledge; for I may digress to observe that the wool-sorters are, as a body, among the best read and most intelligent of working men.

Without claiming for Nicholson a high seat in the august assembly of British bards, his right to admittance will, I think, be indubitably shewn by some of the compositions in the ensuing pages.

The first, "Airedale," abounds in beautiful descriptions of the variegated scenery in the valley of the Aire. He excelled in description of this kind, which he draughted from Nature herself, in a vivid and correct style. During the time he wrote "Airedale," he was in the full vigour and prime of poetic conception; the thoughts and expressions are, notwithstanding, chaster than any of his succeeding productions, and it has fewer faults in either plan or style. To the antiquary and lover of olden times, the scenes bygone which, with the magic of poetry, he brings as it were before the corporal eye, are highly interesting both for

their faithfulness and the stirring emotions which they produce. The versification of this poem is surprisingly correct when it is remembered that it was almost his first essay, but is sufficiently accounted for by the fact that he attentively read from his youth upwards the best English poets. Throughout life his ear was very acute in detecting slips in rhythmical compositions.

"The Poacher" was written next. It has obtained a wide circulation, being read through the length and breadth of the land. He has happily described the hair-breadth escapes by land and flood of his hero poachers. Nothing is exaggerated; but, as the author in his preface to it stated, "The incidents are taken from real life, in which the imagination had little to do, except to aid in turning them into verse." The death of the poacher's wife, and the kindness of a neighbouring peasant in taking the infant, are no imaginary themes, but in all their circumstances actually occurred. The Poacher's Song is so spirited, its measure so unusual, and its touches of a poacher's careless life and manners so striking, as to require the highest praise. I know of no faults in it, except a classical allusion or two, such as "Cynthia," which are quite unsuited to the subject. It will ever be a favourite for its faithful delineation of the incidents in a poacher's life.

"Airedale" and "The Poacher," along with the greater number of the small pieces in this collection of his poems, were comprised in the first volume he published. In the next published by him, the "Lyre of Ebor" holds the leading place. It occupies nearly one hundred pages; it was therefore impossible to print it in this collection without leaving out nearly one-half

of those productions contained in it. Besides the "Lyre of Ebor" is, in my opinion, much inferior to the pieces now printed. It undoubtedly contains passages of exceeding beauty; but as a whole is irregular, and destitute of that sustained energy and method which are indispensable to such a composition.

With the "Lyre of Ebor" originally appeared "Genius and Intemperance." The state of the drunkard which he there pictures, is often merely the transcript of his own mind at the period he wrote it, for it was composed in the intervals of drunken adventures. It is not equal in vigour of conception or happiness of execution to some of his other labours; but contains, notwithstanding, many fine strokes of imagination and feeling. The sketch of the calamities of genius is well drawn, and filled up with very appropriate examples of the miserable lot of poets. No one was better able to shew in its true colours the inevitable result of drinking too often at that cup of Circe,—the bowl of intemperance. Alas! how deceitful the heart! how frail human nature!—that he who knew and could depict so well the fatal evils of the habit, could not shake it off!

"Reflections on the Return of the Swallow" appears to me to be, according to its length, the best production of his pen. It is in many parts deficient in rhythm; it must, however, always be kept in view that poetry is the soul, diction merely the body; but then to be perfect they should be in harmony—beautiful thoughts in beautiful language. This piece is in almost every line imbued with the very soul of poetry. I have read it repeatedly, and confess that if Nicholson had written

nothing beside, it would have been sufficient to give him a high place in my estimation. It was written upon the before-mentioned rock at Harden Beck, on first observing, in the year it was written, the swallow skimming along the surface of the pool of water below. The passage commencing "Search for great Hannibal," is an excellent epitome of the vanity of human greatness.*

It would be a lengthy task to mark the varied excellence of the minor pieces in the following pages. Several of them are full of originality, grace, and feeling; and would not disgrace a collection of the choicest pieces of English poetry. "He has written his *heart* in his poems," and it may be there legibly read. He was no pander to vice. It is greatly to his credit that neither in his published nor unpublished writings are to be found (as I remember) any immoral sentiments.

Almost all Nicholson's pieces were written on subjects which came within the sphere of his own observation. 'Mary of Marley,' 'Maid of Lowdore,' 'Sally on the heath-vestured hills,' had all their living originals with whom he was acquainted.

His genius was naturally suited to the sublime and vast. As an instance, he has rendered or paraphrased the eighteenth Psalm in a manner more worthy of the

* On reading this, the noble poem of the great Roman Satirist suggests itself to the memory, though I believe Nicholson never read it:—

"The urn of ashes to the balance bear,
And mark how much of Hannibal be there."

Tenth Satire, Budham's Translation.

grand original* than any other person who has attempted it. Some parts of Sternhold and Hopkins' version (especially the verse beginning "The Lord descended from above") have been much praised by many of the best judges of poetry, but Nicholson's "Bending heavens obeisance made" is unmatched. I particularly point to this paraphrase, as shewing where his poetic strength lay. He has also admirably paraphrased the 118th Psalm, but it is infinitely inferior to the other.

There is a peculiarity in Nicholson's poetry, namely, that it suits both the grave and the gay. Though he has written many light and sprightly pieces, yet his excellence lay in the sombre path of poetry. The thoughts and feelings which he has embodied in his compositions were drawn, with very few exceptions, from the fountain of his own heart: he detested the vile conceits of affectation. Whatever he wrote was

* I have in vain endeavoured to find among the compositions of the poets of antiquity one equal to this. The noted description by Virgil of the effects of Jupiter's wrath, and which has been compared with this Psalm, falls miserably short of it, for it transcends in sublimity all others. The following is Virgil's:—

"The Thunderer, throned in clouds, with darkness crown'd,
Bares his red arm and flashes lightnings round :
The beasts are fled ; earth rocks from pole to pole ;
Fear walks the world, and bows the astonish'd soul.
Prone Athos flames, and crush'd beneath the blow,
Jove rives with fiery bolt Ceraunia's brow ;
The tempest darkens ; blasts redoubled rave ;
Smite the hoarse wood, and lash the howling wave."

First Georgic, Sotheby's Translation.

Let the reader compare this with the eighteenth Psalm as rendered by Nicholson.

generally on the impulse of the moment,—the sudden bursts of emotion of his strong-toned mind,—the inward promptings of the spirit. For instance, the paraphrase of the eighteenth Psalm was composed one Sunday morning while he was partly undressed ; and produced with the greatest rapidity. Three-fourths of the short productions of his pen were in like manner struck off.

Had his powers been cultivated, there can be no doubt he would have ranked very high as a poet. His great natural poetical ability covered, like as green and pleasant ivy conceals a defective building, the scantiness of his acquirements. The quaint remark of old Fuller, made on one of the mightiest lords of intellect, is not inapplicable to Nicholson—"One is not made but born a poet. Indeed his learning was but little ; so that as Cornish diamonds are not polished by any lapidary, but are pointed and smoothed as they are taken out of the earth, *so nature itself was all the art that was used upon him.*"

The melancholy circumstances of Nicholson's death have elicited from the best of our local poets funeral poems of great beauty. As the writers, being free of the poetic craft, were better able to form a just estimate of his works, and were intimately acquainted with all the main incidents of his life, I have thought it well to print these poems. The writer of one of them (Mr. Crossley) has since descended "untimely to the grave." His memory claims "the passing tribute of a sigh." He possessed all the requisites of a true poet and noble-minded man. "Bard! rest thee sweetly in the grave!"

ELEGY

ON THE DEATH OF JOHN NICHOLSON.

BY ROBERT STORY.

“ We bring our years to an end, as it were a tale that is told.”
Psalm.

MUTE is the Lyre of Ebor ! cold
 The Minstrel of the streamy Aire !
 The “ years ” are pass’d, the “ tale ” is told :
 Prepare the shroud, the grave prepare !

The tale is told—what is the tale ?
 The same that still the ear hath won,
 As oft as in life’s humbler vale,
 GENIUS hath recogniz’d a Son.

First comes the magic time of life,
 When boyhood sees nor dreams of gloom.
 And when within the breast are rife
 Thoughts that are made of light and bloom.

Then youth, with all it’s burning hopes
 Of fame and glory ne’er to die,
 When manfully with fate he copes
 And *will* not deem a peril nigh.

At length he gives to public gaze
 The transcript of his glowing thought ;
 And vulgar marvel,—high born praise,
 Seem earnest of the meed he sought.

Now round him crowd where’er he wends,
 His mind yet pure and undebas’d,
 The countless troop of *talent’s friends*,
 Those who affect—but have not—taste.

These bid him press to eager lips
 The double poison of their bowl—
 Flatteries that weaken as he sips,
 And draughts that darken sense and soul.

Oh! for a voice to rouse him up,
 To warn him, ere too late it be,
 That Frenzy mantles in the cup,
 And that its dregs are—Misery!

Days pass—years roll—the novelty
 That charm'd at first, is faded now;
 And men that sought his hour of glee
 Repel him with an alter'd brow.

Where is the bard's indignant breath?
 Alas! the bard, from habits learn'd,
 Is powerless to resent; and Death
 Kindly receives him—spent and spurn'd.

Talk ye of FAME! Oh! he hath borne
 Contempt alive; but praise him dead;
 Aye, mourn him—whom ye left to mourn;
 Give him a stone—ye gave not *bread*!

No more.—The old, sad tale is told.
 Prepare the shroud the grave prepare!
 For mute is Ebor's Lyre, and cold
 The minstrel of the streamy Aire!

STANZAS

ON THE DEATH OF JOHN NICHOLSON.

BY THOMAS CROSSLEY.

ALAS, that Genius should be doom'd
 In life's unnumber'd ills to share!
 While vain Pretence has oft assum'd
 The honours she alone should wear.

Too soon she meets the frown of scorn;
 E'en Genius palls on Fashion's eye:—
 The flow'r that shar'd the smile of morn,
 Unnotic'd, ere 'tis noon, may die.

Alas, that she, with all her charms,
 Thro' life's rude thorny path should wend;
 And then at last, in Misery's arms,
 Untimely to the grave descend!

Such fate was thine, O gifted bard!
 Tho' Fortune hath her boon denied,
 Yet Poesy, with high award,
 A more than golden mine supplied.

Thy steps she led by banks and braes,
 O'er heathery mountains seldom trod,
 Where thou could'st sing in touching lays,
 Of Nature and of Nature's God.

Aire! thou didst win his fond regard—
 Thy lovely glens—thy peerless daughters!
 Alas, that thy devoted bard
 Should perish in thy treach'rous waters!

Or if, amid the desperate strife,
 He stemm'd at last thy bounding wave,—
 Trait'ress! thou spar'd'st one spark of life,
 And then a clay-cold death-bed gave.

A requiem sad thy night-winds wove,
 'Mid vernal foliage gay and green;
 The stars of heaven, which gleam'd above,
 Sole witness of the mournful scene.

Prostrate in Death's embrace, alone,
 There to the eye of opening day,
 (The spirit to its Giver flown,)
 The wreck of tuneful genius lay.

Ah, thou art gone! thy lyre is still,
 Which thro' the glens of winding Aire,
 From rock to rock, from hill to hill,
 Pour'd forth its magic music there.

The dreary fell, the pathless wold,
 Return'd the echo, sweetly wild;
 And many a rocky vale re-told
 The minstrel strains of Nature's child.

The Harp of Aire, by abbey old,
 Of rapture yields no more a token;
 The hand which wak'd its fire is cold,
 And all its thrilling chords are broken!

The spirit of old Ebor's sires
 How well his living verse pourtrays,
 And banner'd towers, and battle-fires,
 And sylvan sports of ancient days!

But say, shall those for whom to mirth,
 Or sadness his wild harp was strung,
 Be left without a friend on earth
 For whom his tenderest strains were sung?

And for whose weal the gentle rhyme
 He sang, with Nature's gifted powers,
 Like minstrel of the olden time
 In princely halls or lady bowers?

No! Gratitude forbid! and thou,
 Oh Pity! with thy dove-like eyes,
 Look up, and gently stem e'en now,
 The widow's tears—the orphan's sighs.

Bard! sleep thee by Aire's silvery tide!
 Friends shall thy helpless orphans save;
 For them shall generous hearts provide:
 Bard! rest thee sweetly in the grave!

Where Friendship's grief shall freely flow
 And Memory's sigh be gently borne;
 And Genius shall her tears bestow,
 Bright as the dewy flowers of morn!

LINES TO THE RIVER AIRE,
 OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF JOHN NICHOLSON.

BY EDWARD COLLINSON.

COLD were the winds that swept along
 Thy far-fam'd waters, Aire!
 When on thy banks thy bard repos'd
 Till death releas'd him *there*.
 Oft had the music of thy wave—
 The gushing of thy streams—
 Infus'd a *music* in his *heart*
 And mingled with his *dreams*.

In childhood's young and laughing hours,
 Ere sorrow touch'd his brow,
 He lov'd to sport where he could hear
 Thy murmurs, deep and low:
 In youthhood's more ambitious time
 When stirr'd with hope of fame,
 He lov'd thy haunts by wood and glen,
 And *proudly* spoke thy name.

When vex'd with care, or scorn's dark frown,
 He lov'd to wander where
 He could forget the world's neglect,
 Upon thy banks, sweet Aire!
 And when his tuneful harp he strung
 To strains most bold or mild,
 It was to link thy name to song,
 And all thy legends wild.

And when the hour of death drew nigh,
 In midnight's solemn gloom,
 He sought, he *battled*—stemm'd thy wave—
 As if it were his doom,
 To have from thee, as *from their source*,
 Alike, his fame and death;—
 Thou didst inspire his soul with song,
 To thee he gave his breath.

NICHOLSON'S POEMS.

AIREDALE

IN ANCIENT TIMES.

THO' greatest Bards have sung most earthly things,
And scarcely left me room to touch the strings,
Yet humbly would I from the crowd retire,
And strike, tho' feebly, the responsive lyre.
By Nature's hand, O, may my harp be strung,
While I attempt the vale that ne'er was sung !
Spirit of Ancient Times ! my genius turn
To scenes long past—and make my fancy burn !
Genius of Hist'ry ! Learning's loveliest maid,
Around me let thy mantle be display'd ;
Let all thy pow'rs together be combin'd,
My soul t' illumine, and support my mind !

Lead me, O Muse, along Aire's winding course,
To sing of Gordale—its tremendous source,
Where terror sits, and scorns the poet's pen,
The painter's pencil,—all the pow'rs of men :
Where sons of Science oft confounded stand,
To view this wonder of the Almighty's hand !

Here, in dark shade, the rifted rocks appear,
The bursting cataracts assail the ear;
Projecting masses to the clouds are pil'd,
And grandeur revels in her palace wild!
E'en those that to description would aspire,
Gaze mute with awe, and silently retire.
Here fierce banditti once securely slept,
And joyous revell'd, while the plunder'd wept.
We now, secure, these awful cliffs survey,
Nor dread to fall the base assassin's prey.

But softer scenes on Malham Water view,
When its smooth breast reflects the azure blue:
Or when the skiffs, departing from its shore,
Convey the lovely nymphs of Craven o'er—
The still lake ruffled by each rower's stroke,
And its smooth surface into surges broke,—
The circling woods return their cheerful song,
As nymphs and swains harmonious glide along;
While at the flies the glitt'ring fishes bound,
And twice ten thousand eddies circle round.
Anon 'tis ruffled like the foam-white sea,
Then smooth as glass, reflecting ev'ry tree;
The lofty fells upon its breast are seen,
Brown here with heath, and there with brackens green;
Health, rosy Health, diseases drives away,
And Pleasure loves amid those scenes to stray.

Firm fixed near, like the great throne of Jove,
Stands, rudely great, old Malham's lofty Cove,
From whence, in storms, the bursting streams are hurl'd,
Met by the winds, to misty vapours whirl'd.
Here the brave Percies, foremost in the chase,
Were follow'd by the sons of Clifford's race :
Listers and Tempests, on the jocund morn,
Obey'd the cheerful summons of the horn ;
Malhams and Martons, on their hunters fleet,
Scatter'd the moorland moss beneath their feet,—
Rode down the rocky hills with rapid force,
And still undaunted held their ardent course,
While nodding antlers of the mountain deer
Topp'd the high hills,—the hounds, the hunters near ;
Next took the vale, and with ambition tried
Which rider durst o'erleap Aire's infant tide.
The shepherds in the valley left their flocks,
Mounted the hills, and shouted on the rocks.
But, oh ! how soon does human greatness fall !
What years has ruin dwelt in Clifford's hall !
The lord, the baron, and the warrior still,
And mute the horn on Elso's lofty hill !

The sons of Craven now are happier far,—
No Scottish warriors wage the cruel war,
As when the sons of Gargrave sallied forth
To meet the fierce invaders from the north :

When on the shields the battle-axes rung,
Spears broke, helms cleft, and many a bow was strung :
Death thro' Northumbria's fields had mark'd their way,
And mothers wept where lifeless fathers lay ;
Friends, kindred, lovers, on the earth expir'd,
Their dwellings plunder'd, and their churches fir'd ;
The holy crucifix away was borne,
And from the shrines the sacred relics torn ;
The sacramental wine they rudely quaff'd,
Smil'd o'er the flames, and at destruction laugh'd !

But when these hordes arriv'd on Craven's height,
The sons of Gargrave met them in the fight ;
Percy and Garri made a noble stand,
And fought their three-fold numbers hand to hand.
His well-tried sword brave Garri whirl'd around,
And brought three Scottish leaders to the ground ;
The blade of Percy bore the fray so well,
Beneath his arm, five northern warriors fell,
Their helms he cleft with many a mighty stroke,—
His temper'd weapon bent—but never broke.
No banner wav'd, no trumpets sounded clear,
T' inspire their breasts—'twas silent conflict there.
The brackens green, where the hot battle burn'd,
To crimson with the warriors' gore were turn'd :
But soon of Percy's band but ten remain'd,—
The mountain stream with streaks of blood was stain'd ;

The deep-dy'd waters crept, meand'ring slow,
As loth to tell the tragic tale below ;
There many a wounded youth, oppress'd with pain,
Lay on the earth—their pillows were the slain.

With conquest fir'd, the Northerns sallied down,
To plunder Gargrave's lone deserted town ;
The blazing brands within the church they hurl'd,
And soon the flames around the altar curl'd,
While from the burning roof the molten lead
Dropp'd on the ancient tombstones of the dead :
The blood-red sun sunk slowly in the west,
As by the dreadful scene of woe oppress'd :
But plunder ceas'd not in the shades of night,
The blazing ruins lent a baleful light,
Till Skipton's sons appear'd, with banners red,—
The Scots beheld their glitt'ring arms and fled !

What little cause have moderns to complain,
Throughout our isle !—no native warriors slain ;
Our fertile valleys, in improving charms,
With commerce smile, secure from war's alarms.
How chang'd, since Skipton's ancient tow'rs arose,
Their country's strength, and terror of its foes !
Where Meschinès, the long-ejected heir,
Led to the altar Cicily the Fair,
Obtaining thus, what many a life had cost,
With his fair bride, the lands his father lost ;—

All those domains which Edwin once possess'd,
Where fam'd Romili fix'd his place of rest.
By ancient chiefs to Skipton then were brought,
The arms with which the Norman warriors fought ;
Cuirass and corslet, helm and brigantine,
Worn by the warriors of the Norman line,
Bows, quivers, darts, and many a massive spear,
Lances and swords, have oft been polished there ;
Banners, which wav'd when shields and helmets rung,
Were all to Skipton brought, and safely hung
High in the tower, as in a place of trust,
Now wasted all, and worn away with rust.
Here, gorgeous, glitter'd, once in days of old,
Satins of various dyes, adorn'd with gold ;
The ladies' vests with gems were spangled o'er,
And silver'd robes the ancient Cliffords wore ;
Their hangings were of silk, with silver ting'd,
And velvet canopies with gold were fring'd ;
Whole butts of wine were in the cellar stow'd,
And in the hall the vessels oft o'erflow'd,
Upon each dish the dragon was pourtray'd,
And underneath a gory lion laid,
Warriors and arms were graven on the plate,
To show their fathers wish'd them to be great ;
Upon their cups, emboss'd, was many a shield,
And this strong charge—" Let Cliffords never yield !"
Upon the wall their bright steel armour hung,
With dimples mark'd, where many a spear had rung.

Here many a sumptuous lordly feast was kept,
And ladies here o'er warriors slain have wept ;
Here lords have hunted thro' their wide domains,
Rode o'er the rocks, and gallopp'd on the plains ;
Here ancient sports, and many a Northern bard,
Pass'd not unheeded nor without regard ;
Here many a night of jollity has been,
And festive mirth was stamp'd on every scene :
But how can scenes of cent'ries long gone by,
With all the ancient feats of chivalry,
Their feuds, their battles, revelry and sport,
Their imitations of the monarch's court :
Their priests, rever'd, by superstition fed,
Who, they believ'd, could liberate the dead ;
The sieges which the lofty tow'rs sustain'd,
Till on their tops no battlement remain'd ;
Their great possessors, since the Norman king,
Crowd all at once—too much for me to sing :
Then, oh forgive a rustic feeble bard,
When he admits the mighty task too hard !
Yet here, alone, to pass some pensive hours,
In walking round these desolated tow'rs,
Where late such greatness and such valour dwelt,
Reflection, sure, the hardest heart would melt.

But to the vale I'll turn, where Aire winds slow,
And its pure waters scarcely seem to flow ;

Where cattle fed, and scarce a wall was seen,
But all one wide extended park of green ;
Or, when the native butter-flow'rets blew,
The valley shone in robes of golden hue,
The mountain's side with ash was spotted o'er,
Which Nature planted centuries before ;
Above, the huge grey rocks, which ne'er had broke
Since the creation with the hammer's stroke,
Where prickly furze for ages blossom'd round,
And the brown heath the lofty mountains crown'd,
From whence the crystal rills did gushing flow,
To seek repose within the vale below ;
Where the young shepherds sought the cooling shade,
And underneath the far spread branches laid,
Tun'd their sweet pipes, their flocks all grazing round,
While their lov'd nymphs stood list'ning to the sound.
Then near some lonely grange upon the green,
Where the old yew-trees had for cent'ries been,
In rural bliss the loving pairs would play,
And quite forget the labours of the day,—
Sing of some ancient warriors whom they knew,
Firm to their king, and to their country true ;
Or of some maid, who lov'd, but could not gain
The fickle heart of her too haughty swain,—
How oft she wander'd in the fields alone,
Till reason and her beauty all were gone.
They sung, till tears stood trembling in each eye.
And not a heart was there but heav'd a sigh.

Next, on his staff, oppress'd with weight of years,
The father comes, and calls them in to pray'rs ;
His reverend looks they dare not disobey,—
The worst from ev'ning worship could not stay :
Then from his heart the Pater Noster flows ;
He worships God as truly as he knows ;
No new fanatics can with him compare,
In true devotion and the fervent pray'r.

But I must sing of scenes more ancient still,
When off'rings smok'd upon the rocky hill ;
In days long past, when, circled round with wood,
The lowly huts of pristine warriors stood,
Where the majestic oaks their branches spread,
And for the Druids form'd a sacred shade,—
Who, at one period of the changing year,
Did for their deep, imposing rites prepare.
White as the snow their sacred vests appear'd ;—
They as the Gods' vicegerents were rever'd.
On ev'ry hill the milk-white beasts were sought ;
When found, with joy they to the groves were brought.
Then virgins cull'd the flowers with greatest care,
To strive who could the richest wreath prepare ;
While to the harps of bards the peasants sung,
And round the beasts the rosy garlands hung.
The rock, which yet retains the Altar's name,
Had honours paid, and mighty was its fame.

There, 'tis presum'd, the misletoe was laid,
While to their unknown Gods the Druids pray'd ;
There were domestic quarrels made to cease,
And foes at variance thence return'd in peace.
Unlike the various priests of modern days,
So diff'rent, that they teach a thousand ways ;
And tho' they boast superior knowledge giv'n,
Who knows but Druids taught the way to heav'n ?
Then all returning from the Altar's height,
Some fill'd with awe, some smiling with delight,
While ancient bards, as slow they mov'd along,
Touch'd their wild harps, and this their artless song :—

Now with the Gods our peace is made,
No witch's spell or charm
Can make our hawthorn blossoms fade,
Our flock or herbage harm.

Safe from the wolf and furious boar
We rest another year ;
No fox shall take our feather'd store,
Or make our springs less clear.

No fairy climb the lofty oak,
The sacred plant* to kill ;
No warrior wear a bloody cloak,
Or fall upon the hill.

* Mistletoe.

No eagle, from the stormy north,
Shall our young lambs destroy :
Nor hawk nor raven shall come forth,
To blast our rural joy.

But ev'ry thing we want is ours,
Bestow'd by bounteous heav'n,
And falls like fruitful rain in show'rs,
If for them praise be giv'n.

Oft on the hills, to chase the dappled deer,
The painted Britons would in troops appear ;
Swift as the hind they bounded o'er the plain—
The sportive chase was then their only gain.
They knew not then the sickle, scythe, nor hoe ;
No panting oxen labour'd at the plough :
Their flocks and herds were then their only store,
They liv'd content, nor knew, nor wish'd for more.
But, if their chiefs had struck upon the shield,
And call'd their warriors to the embattled field,
They left their homes, and all their rural charms,
And o'er their painted shoulders threw their arms :
The British virgins, while their bows were strung,
Join'd with the native bards, while thus they sung :—

Britain ! the land by Gods belov'd.
The land of warriors brave,
Who ever meet their foes unmov'd,
Nor dread the hero's grave.

By barbarous foes unconquer'd still,
The pastures yet our own ;
And ours the grove and sacred hill,
While Cuno* wears the crown.

The northern nations, fierce, may come,
To waste our fruitful field ;
But those shall rue they left their home,
And soon to Britons yield.

Arm, warriors, arm ! your children call—
The Gods will give you aid ;
Before your spears your foes shall fall,
The mighty army fade !

Arm, warriors, arm ! your all defend—
The Highland foe is near !
Let all upon the Gods depend,
And strangers be to fear !

With quivers fill'd, and brazen spears,
With trumpets loud and strong,
Rush to the fight—the foe appears,
But foes shall not be long.

Thus sung the bards—and at their words,
At once the warriors drew
From brazen sheaths their glitt'ring swords,
And to the conflict flew.

* Cunobuline, a British Prince.

So 'twas of old, one dreadful day,
Which ancient bards did sing,
When mighty warriors fled away,
Like hawks upon the wing.

Fierce were their foes,—the savage boar
Had lent his bristled hide,
Which they for barbarous helmets wore,
With various colours dy'd.

Upon their breasts imagin'd beasts
And monsters were pourtray'd :
The highland skins, with labour dress'd,
Was then their tartan plaid.

Dreadfully grim the van appear'd,
A far extended line ;
From wing to wing their spears uprear'd,
Did bright as silver shine.

The Britons waited not to view
Or study dangers o'er ;
But, dauntless, in their chariots flew,
And stain'd their arms in gore.

The conflicts on the fields of Troy
To this were but a fray ;
Each Grecian warrior but a boy,
To those who fought that day.

No room to bear the banners high ;
No breath to give command ;
No heart to fear, no way to fly ;
But warrior hand to hand !

Swords cut like saws, and broke in twain,
And spears as crimson red,
Were strew'd all o'er the bloody plain,
Or grasped by the dead.

Thus, when the Picts or Romans came in sight,
The Britons rush'd like torrents to the fight ;
Their chariot wheels with sharpest weapons hung,
And from each car were darts and arrows flung ;
Death mark'd the way where'er the chariots turn'd,
And round each chief the bloody battle burn'd :
But if the artful cohorts gain'd the field,
The Britons made the woods their nightly shield,
And when the Romans thought the battle won,
They found, next morn, the conflict scarce begun.
Thus Britons fought,—by Boadicea led,
And on the slain the wolves and eagles fed.

Say, winding Aire ! ye rocks, ye woods, and hills,
How you were stain'd—and how your crystal rills
Ran crimson'd with your native warriors' blood,
When on the heights the Roman eagles stood,
When Olicano's rocky station rose,
And Britain bow'd, reluctant, to her foes !

But now, could Greece her ancient grandeur gain,
Could Roman chiefs once more resume their reign :
Could Cæsar leap on shore t' invade our land,
And all his legions pour upon the strand :
Should Alexander, with his mighty host,
With Xerxes in the rear—all threat'ning boast
To bring the myriads of their warriors here,
The troops of Waterloo would never fear,
For one dread day like that of Trafalgar,
Had brought to peace the ten years' Trojan war !

O Nature ! be my muse—to touch the scene
Of Bingley's glories, which long since have been ;
When in full splendour were its ancient halls,
And high achievements grac'd their massy walls ;
When oaks, which now the whirlwind's force withstand,
Had bent to earth beneath an infant's hand,
Where winding Aire, enamour'd of the place,
Moves on so slow, it seems to stop and gaze ;—
To leave the scene the glitt'ring river mourns,
And shows reluctance in its varied turns,
Till, forc'd at last, it rushes down the steep,
Turns into rage, as if too proud to weep !

Could I but call some venerable shade,
Whose earthly part a thousand years has laid
Within the tomb, in silent, soft repose,
Perhaps it might such things as these disclose :—

Where rolls the stream above yon sacred fane,
And where the hills, in Time's all-wasting reign,
Have chang'd their forms; while struggling for its way,
The furious flood has torn a part away
Of yonder fields, which bear a castle's name,—
There once a castle stood, tho' lost to fame :
But, safely shelter'd from the feudal rage,
It gain'd no place in the historian's page :
And as the greatest temples rise and fall,
So none can tell where stood its ancient hall ;
Its gothic arches and the strong-built keep,
Within th' adjacent floods are buried deep ;
The strong foundations of its lofty tow'rs,
Crumbled to sand, and wash'd away with showr's !

The river's course a thousand times has chang'd,
Since on its banks the ancient Druids rang'd.
The fords, which once the Roman cohorts cross'd,
Fill'd up with sand, are now for ever lost.
The course now fields, where once the river ran—
Emblem of empires, and of changing man !
The streams of Science once thro' Egypt flow'd,
When Thebes in all its ancient grandeur glow'd ;
Then left the margin of the fruitful Nile,
Cross'd o'er to Greece, and made great Athens smile.
Athens and Corinth fell—and Rome appear'd,
Stretch'd forth her empire, and no danger fear'd,

Till Gothic ignorance, with her sable robe
Of darkest superstition, wrapt the globe.
Then bigot Fury rear'd its hydra head ;
Then Science sunk, and all the Muses fled
To their own shades, and there for cent'ries mourn'd,
Nor to Parnassus have they yet return'd :
At length on earth again they deign'd to smile,
And fix'd their residence on Albion's isle,

But stop, my Muse—haste not so far away !
I'll woo thee in my native vale to stay.—
Its beauties be thy theme—the woods and dells,
Sequester'd bow'rs, and sweet melodious bells ;
The flow'r-deck'd lawn, the distant heath-crown'd hills,
Stupendous rocks, and softly murmur'ing rills ;
The woodland echoes, whispering in the trees,
Or floating loudly on the fitful breeze ;
Where nought of sameness the charm'd sight offends,
But ev'ry scene the former scene transcends ;
Where rocks in rich variety are dress'd,
Some in the grey, and some the auburn vest ;
Where varying Nature gives the lovely tinge,
And on the banks suspends the mossy fringe.
But where's the bard can sing of Bingley's vale,
And never once in his descriptions fail ?
'Tis here the modest snow-drop first appears,
Drooping its head, and wet with icy tears,

Like some poor bard, unknown to public fame,
It shrinks and withers on its native stem.
And here the primrose, from its mossy bed,
Silver'd with dew, lifts up its lovely head,
Where springing woodbine to the hazel cleaves,
With snow still pressing down its velvet leaves.
How pleasant here to walk, when daisies spring,
While the sweet bells in tuneful changes ring,
When ev'ry tone the echoing woods receive,
And thus delightfully the ear deceive,
Reverberating, mellow, sweet, and clear,
As tho' a far more dulcet peal was there !

Could I describe the days of olden time,
When first this valley heard the varying chime ;—
I hear them yet—am present at the hour
When zealous crowds from ev'ry village pour,
At early morn, upon the holy day,
To worship God, confess their sins, and pray.
No bigot sects come proudly, faults to find,
But all one creed, one doctrine, heart, and mind.
The Church, establish'd, is their fav'rite place,
And rev'ence dwells on ev'ry varied face.
The manor's lord, with all his household, comes,—
His honest tenants leave their distant homes ;
The rural peasant takes his frugal wife,
And ev'ry child, without religious strife.

The aged come, with years of labour worn,
Nor stop, tho' distant, on the holy morn.
The daughter here an aged mother bears,
Supports her steps, her fainting spirits cheers ;
And there the son leads on his pious sire,
Warm'd with devotion's purest, holiest fire.
'Tis rev'rence all—no lightsome smile appears,
See them, and blush, ye modern worshippers !
Your fathers met their Maker to adore,
Devoutly read the Vulgate verses o'er,
And from the priest words of affection flow'd—
He pray'd, he wept,—until the list'ning crowd
Melted to tears ; and tears that were not feign'd,
Like crystal drops, from all the audience rain'd.
Such were the days when churches were rebuilt,
Tho' days of darkness, not so great their guilt.

Tho' history has shaded o'er with crimes
The long past period of the feudal times,
Here foreign luxuries were yet unknown,
And all they wish'd was in the valley grown,—
Their wholesome food was butter, cheese, and milk,
And Airedale's ladies never shone in silk,
The line they grew their own soft hands prepar'd,
The wool unneeded to the poor was spar'd ;—
But few the poor, unless by age oppress'd,
At little rent some acres each possess'd.

When from the fields the golden sheaves were led,
The lovely fair could glean their winter's bread ;
The husbandman could to his cottage bear
The wither'd boughs his frugal hearth to cheer,
Or oft at eve his willow basket, stor'd
With wholesome viands from his lib'ral lord ;
Or did he want for Lent a proper dish,
Aire's silv'ry streams produc'd unnumber'd fish ;
Their fruitful boughs the mellow apples bore,
And plum trees bended with the sable store :—
The ills which crowded population brings,
Had never broke, sweet rural bliss ! thy wings ;
Then on the green the nymphs and swains would dance,
Or, in a circle, tell some old romance,
And all the group would seriously incline
To hear of Saracens and Palestine,—
Of knights in armour of each various hue,
Of ladies left, some false, and others true.
Their pure descriptions show'd how warriors bled,
How virgins wept to hear of warriors dead,
The furious steeds swift rushing to the war,
The turban'd Turks, the bloody scymitar,
The cross-mark'd banners on the lofty height,
The impious struck with terror at the sight !
Then told what spectres grim were seen to glide
Along this dale, before its heroes died,
Then mark'd their fall within the holy vale,
Describ'd them, lifeless, in their coats of mail,—

Told how some lady, frantic with despair,
Shrick'd, as she plung'd into the deeps of Aire,
When tidings reach'd her from the Holy Land,
That her lov'd lord lay deep in Jordan's sand,—
And how her shrieks flew echoing thro' the wood,
While her rich jewels glitter'd in the flood!
Thus happy they their summer's evening spent,
Parted in peace, and homeward singing went,
Their voices, soft as th' Æolian strings,
Flew to sweet Echo on the haleyon's wings.
Such was this vale when Kirkstall's glories shone,
And who can help but sigh that they are gone?

'Tis pleasant yet to see how ivy clings
Around the walls where night birds clap their wings;
A solemn awe pervades the feeling breast,
To view the sacred earth with ruins press'd,—
The fallen arch, the shatter'd tow'r on high,
Remind us of the days and years gone by;
Imagination sees the whole entire,—
The smoke yet curling in the ancient quire,
And slowly as their clouds of incense roll,
The fragrant grateful scent perfumes the whole,
While the great organ, solemn, deep, and strong,
Joins with the worshippers in ancient song;—
Beholds the Abbot in his robes array'd,
The altar wet, where once Turgesium pray'd,

The tapers burning, till each holy shrine
More brilliant than the thrones of monarchs shine.
The glitt'ring cross, the virgin's image there,
Before the imagination all appear;
The veiled nuns, on some grand solemn night,
Rang'd on each side, their vests of purest white.
Tho' cent'ries intervene, yet fancy hears
The Abbot reading o'er the latin pray'rs;—
How still—how awful! as the solemn strain
Now swells, and now to whispers falls again!
Till the Te Deum, bursting from the crowd,
Sounds like the seas, when winds and waves are loud,
In all the diapasons deep or clear,
Man could invent, or his weak passions bear!
The spot where once the gorgeous shrine was seen,
Is cover'd with a mossy robe of green;
Elms in the cloisters grow, and like a pall,
Hide the fine mouldings of the southern wall;
Upon the place where many a knight lies low,
Weeds, nettles, and the baneful nightshade grow,
While on the cornice wildly waves the fern,
Like verdent plumes, in many a graceful turn.

How chang'd is Kirkstall, since to ruin turn'd,
And slow departing the last Abbot mourn'd;
When ancient records, kept with pious care,
Clung to the boughs which overhung the Aire,

Or toss'd in flames, or into pieces torn,
Like autumn leaves upon the winds were borne ;
Its income gone, and lost its fruitful land,
Which was bequeath'd by many a dying hand ;
The granges ruin'd, and the cattle sold,
The sheep remov'd to a far distant fold ;
All that was good and precious swept away,
And desolation seiz'd it as its prey !
Of all its wealth the once fam'd place bereft,
And but the walls were to the artist left,
While many a pensive stranger, passing by,
Stops to admire, then leaves them with a sigh !

The scenes how chang'd, since Loidis' castle stood
Encircled by the ancient park and wood !
Where streets are now, the shining pheasants flew,
Or cattle cropt the daisies clos'd with dew ;
Commerce, to Albion's modern sons so dear,
Had never spread her golden pinions there.
Where churches stand, some centuries ago,
The swift-wing'd arrow left the archer's bow,—
A village small, no vessel then could ride,
The sails unfurling in commercial pride,
A place of little note and scarcely known,
Whose fame now widely spreads thro' ev'ry zone.
The village youth then heard but Kirkstall's bells,
And rustics sported where the organ swells ;

Where now extends the great commercial street,
The virgins pluck'd the hawthorn blossoms sweet,
And where the spacious public halls are seen,
In times remote was once the village green.
Where noontide hours, and many a summer's night,
Were danced away with feelings of delight.
Upon the hills where oaks for cent'ries grew,
Years, undisturbed, the glossy pheasants flew ;
Partridge and hares in every field were bred,
And never fell, struck by the murd'ring lead.
From aged furze, or from the lonely rocks,
Oft nightly wander'd forth the wily fox.
The valleys echo'd on the early morn,
With hounds, with huntsman, and the cheerful horn !
Then, as they cross'd the vale, fleet as the air,
Forsaken, lagged behind, old wrinkled Care,
Joy join'd the chase, and cheer'd each sportive mind,
And Sorrow there could no companion find.
The life-inspiring eries the hunter knew,
And from each breast dark melancholy flew ;
Pleasure and Mirth the foremost led the chase,
And rosy Health was shining on each face.

With all our modern concerts, parties, balls,
Assembly rooms, our theatres and halls,
Are we more happy than the ancient lord,
With good October sparkling on his board,

His warriors round him, and the tuneful lyre
Strung by the bards, who sung his valiant sire :—
A lady lov'd, who strove her lord to please,
A priest at hand his troubled breast to ease ?
One wife he lov'd, the chase, and moral song,—
No follies broke his constitution strong ;
His guests true hearted, each a warrior brave,
And not a heart but scorn'd to be a slave.
To-day they to the chase or feasting yield,
To-morrow duty calls them to the field.
With learning unrefin'd, they knew no fear,
When front to front they met the shining spear.
Such were the sons of Leeds when Towton's plain
Was crimson'd o'er with thirty thousand slain ;
Their king they lov'd, and for their king they died,
While Wharf's clear stream roll'd on a purple tide ;
And such must modern lords of Britain be,
If Britain conquer, and if Britain 's free !

THE POACHER;

A TALE FROM REAL LIFE.

“The receiver is as bad as the thief.”—*Old Proverb.*

THIS subject wants no Muse the breast t' inspire,
Deep learning,—nor the Apollonian lyre ;
Fine tropes and figures here can nought avail,
'Tis but a plain and simple rustic tale,—
A tale of poachers, partridge, grouse, and hares,
Gamekeepers' acts, their dangers and their fears ;
And who the persons that are most to blame,
Or those who buy, or those who steal the game.
But, in description little is my pow'r,—
I never took a hare at midnight hour ;
Experience cannot teach me how to sing,—
My shot ne'er broke the pheasant's glossy wing ;
No partridge in my hands resign'd its breath,
Nor moor-cock clos'd its beauteous eyes in death ;
For when I found them young upon the bent,
Far from their nests in sympathy I went.

Tho' low the theme, yet lords it has engag'd,
And famous knights have oft at Poachers rag'd.
They act such deeds as make e'en barons swear,
Break down their fine park walls and take the deer;
In every hedge suspend the murd'ring snares,
And from their best preserves fetch bags of hares.
Nor is it strange—a child may know the cause
Why daring Poachers break the nation's laws;
When for one night they gain far more reward
Than for a week of honest labour hard.
Game laws, they think, are made by greedy elves,
Who want the free-created game themselves;
The partridge, snipe, and grouse, for ought they know,
Belong to them just equal with the crow.

The youthful Poacher first a terrier keeps,
And where the conies haunt oft slily creeps
Till one is caught,—and then the foolish boy
Is elevated with a ruinous joy.
His parents chide not, nor his actions blame,
But praise his skill and gladly take the game.
Growing in vice, such implements he gets
As powder, shot, a fowling-piece, and nets.
His parents then too late their follies see,
Pass days of grief, and nights of misery!
Absent from home—he ranges far and wide,
His comrades are his ruin and his pride;

Daily they spend the money they obtain ;
Half drunk at night they sally forth again :
Dangers on ev'ry side they heedless scorn,
If they with hares and pheasants can return.

Ignotus was a man who work could get,
Had he not more than working lov'd his net ;
On the brown fallow he the grain could throw,
Could use a flail, a sickle, scythe, or hoe ;
To rustic youths he had no cause to yield,
A better workman seldom took the field,
Had not his failing been the death of hares,
Keeping a dog, and making nets and snares.
An old experienc'd Poacher, nearly done,
Who scarce could walk, yet gloried in the fun,
Learnt him to call, and how to temper wire,
With rushes, straw, or shavings set on fire ;
Told him what money on a night he made,
When he was young, and fewer of the trade ;
An evening long he lengthen'd out his tale,
Spoke of his feasts on spirits, beef, and ale,
Then prais'd the persons who had bought his hares,—
Forgot his wants, his miseries, and his cares !
Tho' old, infirm, and rack'd with many a pain,
He almost wish'd to pass such nights again !

When sportsmen some notorious Poachers fine,
On game at taverns they should never dine,

For fear it was their own the week before,
Hung in their parks, or shot upon the moor !
But here we scarce can tavern-keepers blame,
They wish to have a wide extended fame ;
And but for Poachers, what could such men do,
When for a feast they want a hare or two ?
If there be supper, or a private ball,
Be there no game, it does not please at all ;
The beaux and belles go home dissatisfied
With ev'ry dainty, roasted, bak'd, or fried.
The ladies blame the master of the house,
If in the feast there be nor snipes nor grouse ;
For that is ever held the choicest dish.
That comes in secret, be it game or fish !
The ladies then in extacy declare
What part they took of partridge, grouse, or hare ;
Describe the dainties when they each get home,
But ne'er consider how those dainties come :
For whether Poachers steal from squires or kings,
This is the cause whence most of Poaching springs.—
The epicures of ev'ry trading town,
Who get a hare or pheasant for a crown,
Have done more harm than all the murd'ring wire
That e'er was temper'd in the Poacher's fire.

The bards of genius sing the orphan's woe,
The rise of nations, or their overthrow ;

Others describe the shipwreck'd sailor's fate.
The terrors of th' ensanguin'd field relate.—
Mine be the task to paint unto the life,
The deep distress of a poor Poacher's wife,
Who in the worst of huts is forc'd to live,
Where winter snow comes thro' it like a sieve ;
The furniture, were it put up for sale,
Would scarcely make a crown to buy him ale ;
His children to the utmost famine driv'n,
Quite destitute of clothes but what were giv'n,
By one whose heart could at misfortunes melt,
Who knew their wants, and for their suff'rings felt.
He sees them shiv'ring oft without a fire,
And what should buy them coals is spent in wire ;
Two-thirds laid out in powder, shot, and nets,
The other part the well-fed landlord gets,—
And when the night of danger 's past away,
While others work, he sleeps throughout the day :
But oft his sleep is broke by sudden fears,
He starts,—and thinks some bailiff's voice he hears,—
He lifts his head,—'tis famine all and dearth,
His famish'd children clinging round the hearth ;
Disease destroying all his partner's charms,
And tears fall on the infant in her arms.
His conscience wakes, tho' nearly hard as stone—
He turns him o'er, and heaves a heavy groan ;
Vows like an honest man's his days shall be—
At last convinc'd his deeds bring misery.

His weeping wife hears the repentant sighs,
In anguish t'ward him turns her tear-drench'd eyes,
Thus speaks, with looks that would the marble move,
While weeping o'er the pledges of their love :—
“Thou once, dear youth, for whom I all forsook,
“To me and mine, O give one thoughtful look!
“Where shall we fly?—our credit all is o'er,
“Thy evil deeds have made and keep us poor.
“My mother, wearied out, no more can do,
“My father's bosom wasting with his woe!
“Thou, while at enmity with ev'ry friend,
“Dost only to the worst advice attend.
“Bring thou but constant wages, I could rest,
“And with a certain pittance should be blest.
“While others sit in plenty and at peace,
“As years roll on their nuptial joys increase,
“Here is our eldest and our only son,
“Who blest us first ere sorrow had begun,
“Without a shoe to travel in the snow,
“By rags defended when the cold winds blow;
“Who knows not yet an alphabet or pray'r,
“Nor ever yet engross'd a father's care.
“Such things as these sink in my bosom deep,
“And hours unseen I sorrowing sit and weep;
“And see those little innocents beside,
“More than half-nak'd, while clothes are wash'd and
dried.

“ While other children are with raiment bless’d,
“ And twice upon a Sabbath-day are dress’d,
“ Ours stand aloof upon the holy day,
“ Or weep, upbraided with their rags at play.
“ Debts undischarg’d, while thou enjoy’st thy cheer,
“ Forgetful of the wants and sorrows here.
“ How well could we be cloth’d,—how well be fed,
“ If like an honest man’s thy life was led;
“ O that the purchasers of game could know
“ My children’s wants—the burden of my woe!”

While thus she spoke, his nightly comrade came,
Extensive orders he had got for game,
From a rich man in whom they could confide,
Theander, whom the Poachers long had tried.
To those who bought his goods he presents made
Of hares and pheasants, yet he ne’er betray’d
The youths who brought them from the distant wood,
And risk’d their lives to bear them o’er the flood!
Then to the distant parks with steps of haste,
They cheerful cross’d the wide-extended waste.
The moon’s resplendent orb was hung on high,
Tho’ hid were half the diamonds of the sky;
While skimming clouds, borne on the wings of air,
Shrouded the heav’ns,—excepting here and there
The moon-beams darted thro’ a misty veil,
And fields of light fled swiftly o’er the dale.

Two dogs attended them across the moor.—
A double-barrel'd gun each Poacher bore :
The hares were feeding on the turnips green,
But Wharf's broad stream roll'd rapidly between,—
So deep the ford, it scarcely could be cross'd,
They greatly fear'd their journey would be lost.
But soon they found the horse they oft had tried,
Which ne'er refus'd to cross the torrent wide ;
Without a bridle to adorn his head,
The peaceful creature by his mane was led.
A while they on the brink consulting stood,
Then mounted both, and ventur'd in the flood.
The stream was rolling rapid, deep, and strong,—
Yet, in the midst, they humm'd the Poacher's song,
'To kill their fears ; for who could help but fear ?
Broad was the river, and the whirlpool near.
The aged horse his oft-tried strength now lost,
And on the rapid stream they both were toss'd !
Their homes the Poachers ne'er had reach'd again,
Had not Ignotus grappled fast the mane ;
Desparo seiz'd his friend—'twas all he could,
And thus, half drown'd, they ferried o'er the flood.
Upon the bank they search for ball and string,
And in the oil-case wrapp'd, they quickly bring
Across the stream their implements of sport,
And with them to the farmer's house resort.
The frugal aged dame is fill'd with fear,
Lest some should say they harbour'd Poachers there.

Her son—a sporting youth, then goes and draws
A jug of ale—regardless of the laws :
Then vows,—nor lord, nor lease, his sport shall stop,
Since hares and pheasants ruin half the crop !
He rouses then the fire, piles on the peat,
And soon the Poachers' clothes smoke with the heat.
The aged farmer, griev'd, with locks turn'd grey,
Sighs in his chair, and wishes them away ;
Then hobbling on his crutch he ventures out,
To listen if the keepers are about ;
While down his furrow'd cheeks the tears run fast,
Afraid with him that year will be the last.
His landlord angry,—now no hope appears ;
But his good farm, possess'd for forty years,
He soon must quit, ere his few days are gone,
Thro' the bad actions of a wicked son.
With eyes suffus'd with tears, the poor old man
To reason with his son then thus began :
“ O that I could persuade thee to give o'er
“ This cruel sport, which makes and keeps us poor !
“ Would'st thou but honestly attempt to live,
“ My little all to thee I'd freely give :
“ But now each field, untill'd, neglected lies ;
“ Thy flail the beasts with fodder scarce supplies.
“ Whilst thou art ranging with thy nets and gun,
“ Our cattle and our farm to ruin run ;
“ Among thy comrades all that little spent
“ Which should have paid my long arrears of rent.

“Nothing but deepest anguish is my lot ;
“I would have liv’d at this my native spot,
“Where I so many years of labour pass’d,
“And where I first drew breath, have breath’d my last !
“But now the workhouse”——here his anguish strong
O’ercame his soul, and sorrow bound his tongue !

The harden’d Poachers could not help but think ;
But soon they took the quart, and swore “Let’s drink !”
Ignotus vow’d that was no time for fears,
The squire must have his score of living hares.
The rich Theander, grown by commerce great,
Had purchas’d with his wealth a wide estate ;
Then down came ev’ry hedge and ev’ry wall,
And ev’ry humble cot was doom’d to fall.
Upon the rising hill each plan was drawn,
Of villa, gardens, grove, and sweeping lawn ;
And planted thick were trees of ev’ry hue,
The oak, the ash, the sycamore, and yew,
The fir, the larch, and plants not native here,
The poplar, with its waving leaves, was there.
The rills collected, form’d a lake for trout,—
And who that has a park would be without ?
With a high fence the whole was circled round,
But in the modern park no hares were found ;
No pheasants in the new plantation bred,
Nor partridge cherup’d its young brood to bed.

But what 's the villa, garden, or park wall,
Except the hares are frisking round them all?
What pleasure in the grove and cooling breeze,
Except the pheasants glitter in the trees?
The partridge whirring from beneath our feet,
In our own grounds, is surely pleasure sweet!
So thought Theander,—who from Poachers bought,
With cheerful heart, all living game they brought.
But stop, my pen—O let it not be said
That great Theander would have bought them dead!

The Poachers, with their nets, their dogs, and gun,
Directed truly by the farmer's son,
Then left the house, and hasten'd to the wood;
In silence there a while they list'ning stood,
Just when the hammer of the village bell
Twelve times heav'd back, the midnight hour to tell.
Then nature such an awful silence kept—
The faded leaves on lofty poplars slept;
The wither'd rushes, on the heathy hill,
Were scarcely mov'd—the tallest pines were still.
The waning moon a bloody vesture wore,
The only sounds, the distant cataract's roar,
And deep-mouth'd mastiffs, struggling in the chain.
Fierce barking to their echo'd noise again.
This solemn scene no deep impression made
On hearts of flint, so harden'd with the trade.

Then thro' the thick-grown briars they wander'd slow,
Looking for pheasants on each lofty bough.
Ignotus swore they would not fire that night,
Till they beheld between them and the light
Ten glist'ning birds within the trees at rest ;
For oft before they number'd many a nest,
And when the powder flash'd, and shot had flown,
Dried sticks and leaves were all that tumbled down.
The number in the wood was quickly found ;
They left them there, and rang'd the open ground.
That night the Poachers did their utmost strive,
To catch the rich Theander hares alive.
Then swiftly round the fields the lurchers went,
Dogs which were silent on the strongest scent ;
And when the flying hare was just before,
Their feet were heard, their panting, but no more.
But fatal for poor Stormer was the night,
Two lusty keepers saw him in the flight,
Levell'd their pieces at the vital part,
And shot poor faithful Stormer thro' the heart ;
While Phillis swift, the fleeting hare pursued,
And left her partner struggling in his blood.
The echoing woods convey'd the swift report,—
The Poachers guess'd the end of that night's sport.
Then quickly sounded Stormer's dying cries,—
Rage fill'd each breast, and blaz'd within their eyes ;
Ignotus swore, " This luckless night I'll die,
" Ere Stormer, wounded, on the field shall lie ;

“ And should a legion of gamekeepers come,
“ The shot of both my barrels shall fly home !”
Weak and more weak the cries of Stormer grew,
As to the fatal place the Poachers flew :
And when arriv’d, Ignotus rais’d his head,
Then heav’d a sigh, and deeply swore, “ He’s dead !
“ O friend, Desparo ! such a dog ne’er went
“ Across the fields, for swiftness or for scent.
“ Poor Stormer ! look, Desparo, where he bled !—
“ How oft to us he has the hares convey’d !
“ How oft have I, with exultation great,
“ Stood list’ning to the singing of his feet ;
“ But now his turning of the hares are o’er,
“ And he must pant close at their heels no more !”

No sooner had these words escap’d his tongue,
Than four arm’d keepers, lusty, stout, and strong,
Leap’d from the bushes with the full design
To make these bold marauders pay the fine.
O’er Stormer’s death their bosoms were enrag’d ;
In desperation, one with two engag’d.
Around the Poachers many a pellet flew,
Before in war they either trigger drew ;
Then all at once their double barrels went ;
The shot whizz’d past,—its force in air was spent :
No time to load again, they met in blows,
The Poachers struggling with superior foes.

His piece Ignotus by the barrel took,
One adversary's arm in splinters broke ;
He groan'd and fled, his piteous case to tell ;
Another stroke,—and strong Ignotus fell !
While bold Desparo, with his strong butt-end,
Made his antagonist to earth descend.
Now two disabled, furious was the fray,
Both sides were stupid, neither would give way.
The barrels broken from their carved stocks,
And on the field were strew'd the torn-off locks.
Enrag'd, Ignotus rose, and drew his knife,
And cried, “ Desparo's freedom or your life ! ”
The keepers dreading much the fatal blow,
Took to their heels, and let the Poachers go.
And where's the squire who can such keepers blame ?
They fought, 'tis true,—but who would die for game ?

Next night, of game Desparo made a feast,
And every well-known brother was a guest.
Not to the ale-house did the group retire,
But drank and smok'd around the Poacher's fire :
Pheasants and grouse, and Stormer's last-caught hare,—
Domestic fowls, unbought, were roasted there.
Their liquor, home-brew'd ale and smuggled rum ;
And each was arm'd had the excisemen come :
But these as soon durst fierce banditti meet,
As force their way into the lone retreat !

The supper ended, what a jovial crew !
Each show'd his nets, of those they had not few.
From friend to friend the cheering bumpers ran,
The viol tun'd, the merry dance began.
O that some greater bard had present been,
And touch'd with verse burlesque the festive scene !
Their tatter'd clothes were such as might have grac'd
Some farmer's scarecrow in a wheat field plac'd :
Thus doth misconduct bring the richest down,
And clothe with rags the Poacher and the clown.

Ducando was a man of careful heart,
He seldom paid a sixpence for his quart ;
To sip the smuggled drops was his delight,—
With such a group he spent the jovial night.
The keeper of the neighbouring squire was there,
Enjoy'd the sport, and drowned all his care.

Inspir'd by drink, who can be silent long ?
The Poachers could not, but began their song :—

SONG.

Come all ye brethren of the night,
Who range the mountain, wood, and vale,
And in the moonshine chase delight,
May our true friendship never fail !

Then drink around,
Your cares confound,
Ye champions of the wire ;
The field—the moor,
Will we range o'er,
Nor care for lord nor squire.

The parliament, such youths as we
With laws may strive to bind ;
But they as soon in cords might tie
The lightnings or the wind !
By Cynthia's beams,
We cross the streams,
To fetch the game away ;
Then here we rest,
With bumpers blest,
And banish fears away.

So long as planets rise and set,
Or tim'rous hares can run,
The Poacher true will hang his net,
And level sure his gun ;
The high park wall,
Spring guns and all,
And keepers strong with beer,
We value not,
Nor shun the spot,
If hares are frisking there.

The lord upon the hunting day
Such pleasures never knew,
When echo bore the sounds away,—
The hounds—the fox in view ;
As when the hares
Are caught in pairs,
Upon the glitt'ring frost !
Should we be fin'd,
What need we mind,
Since others pay the cost ?

We stop not at the rivers deep,
The frost or winter's snow ;
The lazy keepers soundly sleep,
When tempests wildly blow.
Of rain and hail,
Let Jove's great pail
Be emptied from on high ;
The darker night,
The more delight,
And greater numbers die !

The song was ended ;—and Ignotus drew
The plan of ev'ry distant park he knew ;
Describ'd each gateway where he hung the net,
And ev'ry hedge, where oft his wire he set ;
Mark'd out the fish-ponds, and the river's flood,
The pheasants' haunts, and where the villa stood.

“ Upon this spot,” said he, “ one stormy night,
“ When darkest clouds obscur’d the moon’s pale light,
“ I stood alone, while Stormer rang’d the plain,
“ And five strong hares within my net were slain !
“ And here the place where I my tackling hide,
“ When lusty keepers press on ev’ry side ;
“ And here, within the wood, the lonely dell,
“ Where oft I fir’d, and sleeping pheasants fell.
“ Here stands the tree to which the cord is tied,
“ And there my game across the river ride ;
“ Then I the bridge securely travel o’er,
“ And none take oath that murder’d game I bore.”
The junior Poachers, silent, sit and gaze,
And give with joy the senior Poacher praise.

T’ increase their sport upon this festive night,
These bungling verses did a rhymers write :

The Poachers on the heath, the fields, the wood,
Or where the shining fishes cleave the flood,
Against the laws will yet pursue their sport,
And to the parks of distant lords resort,
Tho’ half their incomes were to keepers paid,
Tho’ traps were set, and ev’ry scheme were laid,—
The Poachers, heedless of the fine or shame,
In spite of all would sometimes steal the game.
Then those that would such things in safety keep,
Must catch and couple them like straying sheep :

And lords who would make property of game,
Cut short their wings—like poultry keep them tame.
For 'tis a truth, and let it once be known,
A Poacher's shot's oft surer than your own.

They laugh'd—they shouted—when the rhymers ceas'd,
(For fools, half drunk, with feeblest verse are pleas'd.)
Then four strong keepers burst the shatter'd door,
And stood well arm'd upon the dirty floor.
Desparo and Ignotus forc'd their way;
The rest, o'erpower'd, were captives forc'd to stay.
Game, newly kill'd, was in the cellar found,
Snare, pack-thread, guns, and nets were spread around:
The Poachers, mournful, left their lawless sport,
To meet the dreadful audit of a court.
Desparo and Ignotus knew their cares,
Supplied their wants, and kill'd the squire his hares;
Death and destruction thro' his grounds were spread,
Till scarce a leveret on the clover fed.

With sorrows worn, and ebbing fast her life,
Unhelp'd, unheeded, lay the Poacher's wife.
He spent his days in revelry and mirth;
While she, too weak to give her infant birth,
O'ercome with grief, and of her suff'ring tir'd,
Neglected, starv'd, and pitiless, expir'd!
No husband there, her fading eyes to close,—
Confess his guilt, tho' author of her woes.

When he was told the period of her pain,
He smil'd, and had the tankard fill'd again :
Untouch'd with sorrow, anguish, or remorse,
One tear he never dropp'd upon her corse.
He left his home the two succeeding nights,
To make expenses for the funeral rites.
His starving children o'er their mother mourn'd,—
A neighbouring peasant o'er the infant yearn'd,
In pity took and nurst it as her own,—
And sure such deeds are worthy of renown.
Loos'd from his wife, with whom he jarring liv'd,
His children bread thro' charity receiv'd.
One night he spent where lies fam'd Robin Hood,
The next where Harewood's ancient castle stood ;
The beauteous vale of Wharf he wander'd o'er,—
Expecting wealth, but still was always poor.
What he in dangers got at taverns went,
Or in rich treats was on his comrades spent.
Read this, ye rich,—who stolen game receive,
And think how wretchedly the Poachers live :
Far from your feasts prohibit lawless game,
Caught in disgrace,—and purchased with shame !

Ye rustic plunderers, who sport by night,
And fearlessly invade another's right,
Cold winds and storms your frame will soon impair,
Your robust limbs will soon in sickness wear ;

Tho' firm your sinews as the hardest steel,
Your constitutions must your follies feel :
The sport, the bowl, the glass, the cheering quart,
Soon, soon will fail to animate the heart.
Ye who purloin by night the harmless game,
Ere youth is past, old age shall rack your frame.
No days well spent can you look back to view,
At last convinc'd this axiom is true,—
“ If injur'd lords no punishment prepar'd,
“ Drinking and poaching bring their own reward.”

On lost Ignotus' fate a moment gaze,
Who in his cups oft gain'd the drunkard's praise ;
He swiftly hasted with his pilfer'd load
The bridge to shun and oft-frequented road.
Beneath a sheet of ice the river slept,
Half o'er its course the thoughtless poacher stepp'd,
Around his feet the yielding crystal bends,
And, dreadful ! in a spreading circle rends.
He heard,—he trembled,—but it was too late,
The ice gave way, and lock'd him up with fate.
Till morning came his faithful lurcher stopp'd,—
Howl'd near the chasm thro' which his master dropp'd.
His frantic children view'd the fatal cleft,
Tho' injur'd,—their affection still was left ;
Their grief,—their woe,—can never be express'd,—
Imagination must depict the rest.

His corse, tho' sought, was never brought to land,
But somewhere lies deep shrouded in the sand.
His neighbours wept not, tho' he ne'er return'd,
And for his loss his children only mourn'd.

No distant parks but ev'ry shade he knew,
From whence at morn the waking pheasants flew ;
The lonely streams where speckled fishes play'd,
And where the hares upon the mountains fed.
The dark brown heath, upon the trackless moor,
With dog and gun he often ranged o'er ;
In winter's frost, upon some rocky spot,
He call'd the list'ning grouse within his shot,
Then on his uprais'd knee he levell'd true,—
The trigger pull'd,—the moorcock never flew :
But now—the hares may feed, the fishes play,
The pheasants sleep upon the lofty spray ;
The grouse, secure, may in the rushes rest,
The speckled pairs of partridge form their nest ;
The keepers now their watchings may give o'er,
Ignotus, prince of Poachers ! is no more.

GENIUS AND INTEMPERANCE.

DEATH and Disease my solemn muses be :
Throw o'er my soul a sickbed's canopy ;
Let sorrow dictate ev'ry mournful line,
And, true repentance, let the strains be thine !
Tears wet the page, while falling like the rain,
O'er my two friends by wine untimely slain.

Their mothers met, their fathers friendly were,
Before their infant eyes could drop a tear ;
And when they felt the first of earthly joys,
When first they toddled, oft exchanging toys,
Pluck'd in each others gardens, flowers they chose,
And smil'd together, when they knew not woes.
How oft their parents talk'd of future times,
And pray'd that they might e'er be clear from crimes,
Pleas'd to behold them in a garment new,
And lov'd them better as they older grew !
Young Philo join'd them—then the happy three
In pleasure liv'd, and knew not misery.

Far on the hills, amid the purple bloom
Of honied heath, they talk'd of bliss to come :
Then bath'd amid the mountain's crystal spring,
Blithe as the trout that skims with finny wing.
A thousand sports were there to make them blest,
The happiest moments when the heath they press'd ;
When the wild lapwing, or the grey curlew,
Screaming around their heads in circles flew,
And moorhens, rolling o'er the bent and heath,
To save their little broods from instant death ;
But when the cruel youths once came too nigh,
They spread their wings, and show'd they yet could fly :
An emblem these of joys seen just before,
We grasp in hope, they fly, and are no more.

Of in mischievous sport these took delight,
And made the sable ev'ning clouds seem bright
With fiery turf, with heath, and brackens dry,
The heath soon blaz'd, and seem'd to light the sky,
As if some great volcano there had been,
And ting'd with lurid glare the midnight scene.
Philo would talk of Ida's mighty flame,
When blaz'd the woods, and liquid iron came ;
Compare it then to Etna in his mirth,
And spoke of Herculaneum swept from earth ;
Then talk of great Vesuvius' mighty blaze,
And wish'd that on its terrors he could gaze.

The furious flames now to a circle spread
A mile around, and dy'd the smoke with red ;
Then came the besom-makers with a shout,
And with their besoms strove to dash it out ;
Scorch'd with the flames, the heat they could not 'bide,
For they with brooms as soon had stopp'd the tide.
The ling was deep, and aged was the bed,
Dry was the night—the flames in fury spread
To such extent, that nought could stop their force,
Till not a branch of heath was in their course.
Where first the fire began the youths were lain,
Vowing they ne'er would fire the heath again.
Their other fires some acres swept away,
'This blacken'd many hundreds ere 'twas day :
An emblem this of drink—we take a quart,
Perhaps some spirits, ere from friends we part,
And then another glass, perhaps the same,
'Till folly spreads into a foolish flame.

My tale must pass o'er years, with all their joys,—
They spent their lives in play, like other boys.
Young Philo was to learning most inclin'd,
But Amphorus to music turn'd his mind.
Paros, a lovely youth, within his breast
Of mortal feelings surely had the best.
He saw not misery, but shed a tear,
And all his friends he lov'd but far too dear ;

Believ'd all flatterers were such as he,
So honest, man's deceit he could not see.
The ev'ning sun of summer seldom set,
But these three youths in purest friendship met,
Talk'd till the light had faded in the sky,
Or listen'd Amphorus' wild melody.
Sometimes young Philo, struggling with his theme,
An ev'ning from his comrades would redeem ;
His mind expanded as his knowledge grew,
And learning, every step, more pleasant grew.
He saw the hidden springs of Grecian lore—
Each draught he took but made him thirst for more.
Amphorus said, " For nought on earth I'll live
" But those sweet pleasures harmony can give ;
" Whate'er my kindred leave me shall be spent
" On music, and the noble instrument
" Which brings the skylark's note, or the deep tone
" Which shakes foundations of the firmest stone.
" The viol's sweetest tones I yet will know,
" The harp's, from whence soft melody can flow ;
" Each varied part my bosom shall inspire,
" Of lively concerts, or the solemn choir ;
" And marches for the army I'll compose.
" Such as shall sound when Britain meets her foes.
" The music of the ancient school I'll learn,
" And where the solemn chords of dirges mourn ;
" Mozart, Von Weber, in each lofty flight
" I'll follow, till I catch their notes at sight."

Young Paros, smiling, look'd on Nature's face,
And with his eye her outlines he could trace ;
In youth he begg'd for colours to be bought,
To place upon the canvas what he thought.
With practice now he can in shades pourtray
The varied tints of soft departing day,
Touch the rich landscape with such light and shade,
That many thought the pencil'd objects play'd.
The youths and virgins, in the bow'rs of love,
Were so like Nature, that they seem'd to move.
Whene'er the landscape was by Paros shown,
The varied trees and ev'ry shrub were known.
Send Paros where you would, in ev'ry place
His lively eyes were fix'd on Nature's face :
But such his fervent zeal to gain a name,
Deep study shook at last his tender frame,
And for his health, and for the art he lov'd,
From Cumbria's scenes to Paris he remov'd.—
Pleas'd with the paintings, where the Masters shone,
He gaz'd upon them as a chisel'd stone
Form'd to a statue ; so engag'd his mind,
He thought not then of Nature's scenes behind ;
But when the time arriv'd that he must part,
The thoughts of Grasmere rush'd upon his heart.
No scenes in Paris gave him such delight
As he had found upon Helvellyn's height,
Where o'er its top the eagle soars on high,
And round its rocks the strongest ravens fly.

Grandeur may be at Paris in fine forms,
But not tremendous, like great Skiddaw's storms,
Walk Paris round, and view its beauties o'er.
What are its fountains to the grand Lowdore,
Where, dashing from the dreadful chasm on high,
The cataract seems as rushing from the sky.
These Paros saw—retiring in despair,
He durst not venture at the grandeur there.
Oft he beheld the mist from Derwent lake
Slow curling to the hills in many a flake,
And as the morning sun sent forth his rays,
The scene was far above the highest praise ;
Such there is seen when not a zephyr blows,
When the pure lake upon its surface shows
Skiddaw inverted, and the cliffs on high—
Fit scenes to wake the noblest minstrelsy.
Oft Paros view'd the yellow orb of night,
When rising on the lake with golden light,
Her shadow dancing like a sheet of flame.
And with the scene soft Meditation came.
Beneath the oaks, and opposite Lowdore,
Oft Paros sat and heard its torrent roar,
Sketching the trembling waves, when Keswick's bell
Humm'd through the valley with a solemn swell.
The hills return'd the sound with weaken'd power,
And told the artist 'twas the midnight hour.
He thought upon the peace he left behind—
The thoughts of Ellen press'd upon his mind :

Ellen, that ever was to Paros true,
At Grasmere dwelt, where waves the solemn yew.
Oft had he led her up Helvellyn's height,
Her cheeks like roses, and her gown as white
As is the snow where British eagles dwell,
Upon the mighty rocks from whence Gough fell.

When in the Louvre and the Champ de Mars,
He thought of France and all her bloody wars,
With all the arts,—to Paros these gave pain,
While admiration mingled with disdain,
To think what noble works to France were brought,
The noblest statues, by great sculptors wrought,
When thousands fell, and from the sacred shrine
Such works were torn as, France, were never thine!
While the great artists slept within the tomb,
By study hasten'd to an early home,
Their paintings such as wet the eyes with tears,
With by-past actions of a thousand years,—
Adam and Eve, the flaming sword behind,
So well pourtray'd, it seem'd as if the wind
Bended the flames, or as Eve's flowing hair
Wav'd with the blast of vengeance that was there;—
The Saviour dead—before the sheet was thrown
O'er him that made all worlds, and wears the crown.
Great is the imitation! but I shrink
That greatest artists ever yet durst think

To paint the Saviour, giver of all bliss,—
Raphael ne'er could form a face like his,
Could he have seen how fair in death he slept—
The hardest heart that view'd it would have wept.
These things are nothing to the present theme ;
Paros believ'd his Saviour would redeem
Poets and painters, tho' they wildly rov'd,
For Genius sure in heaven must be belov'd.

Through France and Switzerland the artist rang'd,
Where fruitful scenes to Alpine mountains chang'd ;
And view'd the whole with unexpress'd delight,
Scenes rich by day, and nobler still by night.
As on the Alps the avalanches rise,
Hills of eternal winter pierce the skies.
He climb'd their sides, with perseverance true,
Till kingdoms on each side were in his view.
Arriv'd at Rome, his young researching mind
With works of ev'ry master was refin'd.
What there he saw, what artists can behold,
To tell, might make this humble tale seem cold :
But he return'd again to Cumbria's fells,
To Derwent-water, and to Grasmere's dells ;
Then his rich neighbours flock'd around to hear,
How well he lik'd at Rome, what saw he there ?
He said, De Urban's lively canvas spoke,
And great Raphael every passion woke :

Carracci's master-piece would make you weep,—
He knew so well what would his paintings keep,
That on each face you'd think old Nature play'd,
And Life seem'd dancing in the light and shade :
But would not any trav'ler seem a fool
To tell the masters of each varied school ?
Paros beheld their works, and thought them fine,
But Paros drank, in France, too deep of wine :
For he who once was well content with beer,
Must now have spirits, his weak heart to cheer ;
Then he could tell what he had seen away,
Live in high life, and ne'er have aught to pay.
Is there an arrow for the eagle's breast ?
Is there a shot to pierce the raven's nest ?
Is there for mortals any earthly curse ?
There 's nothing to a Genius that is worse.
Hundreds have 'spirits' sent unto the tomb,
And made for youth the grave an early home.
Death 's the dire consequence of drinking deep,
Then children, widow, and relations weep.
So 'twas with Paros—he could paint the form
Of wild despair, when struggling with the storm ;
Sketch the wild anguish of a vessel's crew,
Their bowsprit lost, and but her masts in view ;
Paint well the billows, that they seem'd to roll,
And with his pow'rful pencil freeze the soul.

Nature was in his strokes, and ev'ry touch
Was neither yet too little nor too much ;
Secure in his imagination's might,
Nature his pencil guided, and 'twas right.
Uprais'd to fame, his company was sought,
And likenesses he sketch'd as if they thought ;
So well he touch'd the portrait of the fair,
She seem'd to breathe, as life herself was there.
The battle-piece of Preston Pans he took,—
The scene the noble mind of Paros woke.
An ancient song, with fire in ev'ry line,
Gave the first sketches of the great design ;
These were the words that fir'd his feeling heart,
And told how madly Stuart play'd his part :—

The flashing claymores gleam afar,
And small the files in distance are,
Each helmet glitters like a star,
As clansmen are advancing.

The trenches dug are broad and deep,
In which the loaded cannon sleep—
Silent their guns the terrors keep,
To wait the Scotch artillery.

Behind the hill the fight began,
Death came with ev'ry kilted clan,
And down fell many a southern man,
The pipers sounding victory.

They yet remember'd Glencoe's vale,
And sent their bullets thick as hail,
And with the broad-swords cut the mail,
And met the slaughter dreadfully.

Now rages discord—man and steed
Rush to the charge—they fall, they bleed—
Forgot is many a noble deed,
The battle burns so terribly.

Each cannonier, with charge in hand,
And others with the blazing brand,
Close to the heated cannon stand,
The smoke ascending rapidly.

The steeds, that left the foam behind,
The pennons, streaming in the wind,
And Scots, that scorn'd a coward's mind,
Rush'd to the onset gallantly.

The English, loyal and more true,
The thistle scorn'd, and firmer grew,
As closer press'd the bonnets blue,
Inspir'd with Highland minstrelsy.

The smoke, the blaze, the charge, the fire,
The ranks that fall ere these retire,
And England's banner lifted higher,
Were grandeur and sublimity.

Then darkness comes—the blaze is seen
At distance, and long time between
Each flash, which through the day had been
From cannon quick as musketry.

What Scotland won, soon Scotland lost ;
Culloden all the glory tost
To the cold shades, and there the frost
Nipp'd her sharp thistle cruelly.

Brave Gardiner !—in death he lay ;
A better never lost the day,
Nor nobler spirit fled away
To realms of blest eternity.

The banners now must wave no more,
The dreadful conflict now is o'er,
And Scotland shall be clear from gore,
For discord 's lost in amity.

On the broad canvas Paros had pourtray'd
The varying glances of each shining blade,
Left all descriptive poetry behind,
And stamp'd at once the battle on the mind ;
But close beside him was the bottle hung—
He drank when faint, then painted as he sung ;
But when the cheering draught had lost its head,
His pencil shook, and all his fancy fled.

When warm'd with wine, his airy thoughts brought home
The paintings, statues, and the scenes of Rome;
Columns of ev'ry order, laid on earth,
Where Desolation frolick'd in her mirth;
All Nature roll'd before his strong ideas—
The land, the skies, the cities, and the seas;
But soon his pulses in quick motions beat,
His ruin'd appetite enjoys no meat,
His frame decays, the mind is weaker made,
He starts in dreams—his bosom 's sore afraid.
No pleasure can his weeping Anna give;
To him 'tis now no happiness to live;
He values not the bubble of a name,
Nor prides himself in vain posthumous fame.
When his bright eyes grew dim, and fancy fled,
Bound to the confines of a dying bed,
The pleasing landscape could no longer cheer;
His mind was weak, his dissolution near,
When his pale cheek was laid on Anna's breast,
And his cold hand by her he lov'd was press'd.
What weeping then!—no language now can tell
How tears were rain'd when such a genius fell.
Then was destroy'd a gen'rous noble mind,
While the destroyer lurk'd in shades behind.
Dreadful Intemperance! thy tempting snare
Holds while thou slayest, O, father of Despair!
There lay the artist, ready for the tomb.
His valued paintings hung around the room;

Here the old ruin, and the shades below,
Spread where the crystal streams of Eden flow,
And there the copy of the ocean storm,
From Powell's, with the waves in ev'ry form.
Oh! the sad sight—'twas solemn there to tread,
To view his works, and see the artist dead.
How placid he appear'd!—he seem'd asleep—
I wept, and all his portraits seem'd to weep.
It was the last farewell—he could not hear—
His eyes were clos'd in peace, and not a tear
Wet his pale cheek—he panted not for breath,
But outshone life as calm he lay in death.

His spirit's fled, his hand is still,
His pencils now are useless laid,
No more to sketch the vale or hill,
No more to touch the light and shade.

Let violets bloom where he is lain!
Ye flowers, stay late upon his tomb!
He ne'er can paint your tints again—
True genius now has left its home.

Relations wept, and Anna deeply sigh'd,
For Anna, had he liv'd, had been his bride;
But all their weeping was an empty show,
Compar'd to Philo's "eloquence of woe."

When Philo enter'd, not a word he spoke—
The feelings of the friend and poet woke ;
Thoughts flew across his fancy, wild and deep,
When Paros' eyes were seal'd in endless sleep.
He thought upon the soul of genius fled,
Words burst in sorrow while young Philo said—
“Where is the spirit gone ? Could such a mind
“Vanish in air, and leave but clay behind ?
“Could matter think ? Could dust thro' systems roll ?
“No—'twas the spirit fled without control.
“Sceptics, come blush, who think the soul is air—
“Look on his corpse when there 's no spirit there.
“The mind that once was kept by genius bright,
“I knew in innocence, when, day or night,
“Joy plum'd its wings : O, happiest days on earth !
“When pleasure chang'd from purest joy to mirth.
“From mirth to rural bliss, from that to sleep,
“When health was good—we knew not how to weep.
“His mind for ever stretch'd in fancy strong,
“He soar'd too high on earth to tarry long :
“But language fails, while thus my bosom swells—
“I soon shall find where Paros' spirit dwells ;
“Then shall unnumber'd worlds, and all things new,
“Beyond the reach of man, burst on our view.”

Through Nature Philo's lively fancy flew,
He something of each varied science knew ;

He read of polar wonders with delight,
And search'd each cause on which the learned write.
He learn'd to know how little mortals know
Of things above, or meanest things below,
That when the northern dancing streamers fly,
They cannot tell how these can light the sky ;
He learn'd to know that men of wit and thought,
With greatest learning, scarce have learned aught.
Philo the works of navigators read,
That round the globe the bending canvas spread ;
He knew by reading what each clime brought forth,
From Nova Zealand to the cold Cape North.
Astronomy he lov'd—his soul flew far,
Thro' all the systems, to the polar star,
Nor rested there—he struggled to explain
The cause of tides that roll upon the main.
Greek was his glory, Homer's verse he knew,
His mind thro' Æschylus with pleasure flew ;
He read each passage, soft, sublime, and strong,
From great Euripides to Sappho's song ;
His mind was learning's self, for such as he,
That love to learn, grasp at infinity.
The microscopic beauties they behold,
Where atom insects seem as ting'd with gold ;
Trees, plants, and birds, and all that is or was,
In quick succession through their fancies pass,
And ev'ry language, vulgar or refin'd,
Are nothing to express the scholar's mind.

Philo in study pass'd his years away,
Ere he was led to college far astray.
There, with all aids, the dissipated youth
Fly from the paths of rectitude and truth;
The greatest learning sometimes turns a curse,
At ev'ry step the human heart grows worse.
Tho' these can have the globes, the map, the chart,
And ev'ry help of Nature and of Art,—
Old vellum manuscripts of Runic lore,
And those which ancient Romans scribbled o'er.
From Egypt curiosities are brought,
Perhaps two thousand years since these were wrought,
Parchment from Athens, papyrus from Rome,
Where Learning had a palace for her home.
Language is now at college which was spoke
When Britons groan'd beneath the Saxon yoke.
All that three thousand years can now supply,
Are spread before the youthful scholar's eye;
However dark the works, they there can gain
Others that will the darkest parts explain.
But Philo, taught by many a pompous guide,
For Nature's scenes and his own closet sigh'd.
Sorrow, he found, with learning must increase—
All chances there, but still he wanted peace,
And sigh'd for solitude beneath some hill,
Where at its foot runs swift the moorland rill,
The blossom'd bough, the birds upon each spray,
Chaunting their vespers to departing day,

Where bounding trouts within the brook arise,
When winds are still, and sporting are the flies.
Such rural pleasures Philo then could please,
And nought on earth can equal joys like these.
No pleasure half so near the joys above,
As he experienc'd when he met his love,
True as Leander, she as Hero true,
Bliss most refin'd, the greatest e'er he knew.
Kings have not more, and riches cannot give
Such bliss as when in innocence we live.

Within the valley Philo had a friend,
With whom he many a happy hour did spend,
His greatest glory was to make him blest—
He lent the youth all volumes he possess'd.
Here Philo, happy, pass'd his hours away,
Ere wine had led his tow'ring soul astray.
He read of battles, and the sons of Jove,
Of mystic rites, and of the scenes of love.
In learning's happy hours the youth was blest,
Till love's strong passion rag'd within his breast ;
Then lost was peace, and Homer's noble fire
Was quench'd amid the fervour of desire ;
Forgot the things below, the orbs above,
His tow'ring spirit was subdu'd by love.
She that had vow'd to love him while away,
Bless him at eve. and think on him by day,

Like woman, to be rid of anxious pain,
Forsook young Philo for a vulgar swain.
Then fell the genius—Philo's love was scorn'd,
In silent grief the foolish scholar mourn'd,
Cobwebs were seen among his modern books,
And Care had stamp'd her image on his looks.
What tuneful Virgil ? or what Homer then ?
What all the writings of the wisest men ?
What all the greatest literature of earth ?
What all his studies ?—all are nothing worth.
French and Italian, Hebrew, Latin, Greek,
Serv'd but the anguish of his soul to speak.
His heart beat fast with love, tho' learn'd and young,
And thus, in lofty Greek, the scholar sung :

“ What is the consummation of desire,
“ The scholar's learning, or the poet's fire ?
“ What pleasures from the greatest knowledge flow ?
“ Learning is oft the cause of deepest woe.
“ The peasants may admire the learned youth ;
“ But did the poor unletter'd know the truth ;
“ How fine their feelings, how their lives are spent,
“ They then would sing, enjoying true content.
“ The learn'd may search antiquity for years,
“ Or read till not a novelty appears,
“ These cannot Nature from the bosom move,
“ No—more they know, the stronger is their love ;

“And women, oh ! I write it with a tear,
“Soon lose affection when you are not there.
“O, angel forms ! heaven’s master-piece on earth ;
“Sources of pain, the fount of joy and mirth !
“Destroyers of dark grief, the cause of woe !
“But why be blam’d, since Nature made you so ?
“Sometimes as true as Sol’s returning rays,
“But oft as fickle as the meteor’s blaze.”

Now Philo’s years amount to twenty-one,
And he a learned youth, a hopeful son ;
His lyre he tun’d, and love was in its sounds,
And he sole master of three thousand pounds.
As when the rider, on the grassy plain,
The useless bridle thrown upon the mane,
The curb of wisdom thus did Philo throw,
Resolv’d all passions of mankind to know.
A sable velvet coat he first had made,
And o’er his breast the shot-belt was display’d ;
With spaniels and swift greyhounds Philo rang’d,
As fancy led, so his amusements chang’d ;
Each night at parties, at the course next day,
And thus the hours of Philo pass’d away :
Or when the horn proclaim’d the cheerful chase,
Philo was there, with pleasure on his face.
At concert, play, the masquerade, or ball,
With learning. mirth, and wit he outshone all.

No thoughts of feeble age, or future days—
His soaring mind was ever drunk with praise.
His gay companions now with him would go,
And view the far-fam'd field of Waterloo;
Provided well with gold, they bade farewell,
Each to his fair, and saw the ocean swell.
When in the strongest gale, upon the prow
Young Philo stood, and watch'd the waves below,
Whose foaming tops were whiten'd o'er with spray,
And toss'd the vessel as she plough'd her way,
With heart undaunted he beheld the tide—
His mind rejoic'd to see the vessel ride,
Her head amid the waves, her stern on high,
And then her bowsprit pointing to the sky;
One hand was firmly grasp'd around the line,
The other held a quart of purple wine.
Serene, he view'd the waves in ev'ry form,
And vow'd 'twas wine inspir'd him in the storm:
For firm he stood, and saw the vessel plough
Through hills of seas, his friends all sick below.
The tempest ceas'd, the winds retir'd to rest,
The bark skimm'd smoothly o'er the ocean's breast.
On deck the sea-sick passengers appear'd,
By Philo and the sailors loudly cheer'd.
The youth had seen the well-built vessel roll,
The sight had warm'd his genius, fir'd his soul;
The lightning's flash, the thunder, and the sea
Had rais'd his mind to noblest ecstacy.

The sails were full, and, leaning on her side,
Swiftly she cuts her passage thro' the tide,
And soon the land is seen in distance blue—
The level shores of Belgium they view.
The music sounds, the wines like water run,
When mirth upon the vessel is begun,
The captain joins, and there the spirits shine,
The choicest brandy and the best of wine,
And soon they hail'd a vessel which they knew,—
The captain from the steerage quickly threw
A cask of Hollands—with the best 'twas stor'd—
The sailors shouted when 'twas heav'd on board.
Then discord rose, and ev'ry sailor drunk—
Three fell astern, and in the ocean sunk.
The boat was lower'd, but mirth and joy were o'er,
They fell—but from that fall they rose no more,
Till the rough billows brought each corpse to land,
And left them nearly buried in the sand.

Arriv'd upon the hill where armies fought,
Young Philo's soul was all absorb'd in thought;
The place where thousands lay interr'd was seen,
And there the grass wav'd with a deeper green.
He thus reflected:—"What a stillness here!
"Low the hussar, and cold the cuirassier;
"The meeting armies shout not on the field,
"Nor fall by thousands. each too firm to yield;

“The close-wedg’d squares of British troops are gone,
“Now still ’s the place where Europe’s peace was won;
“Mute are the bugle and the trumpet’s calls,
“Yet here the plough shall find the bones and balls,
“And here the spade shall turn up many a skull,
“And broken arms, of which the fields are full.”

In thoughtful contemplation Philo gaz’d,
And saw the spot where Hugomont had blaz’d;
He thought what thousands fell when that was fir’d,
Then, with a sigh, from Mount Saint Jean retir’d.
At Belle Alliance, at the close of day,
The blithe companions drove their cares away;
Inspir’d with brandy, Philo’s muse awoke,
And in extempore verses thus he spoke:—

“Low laid in yon mountain the hero, the brave,
“The Prussian, the Frenchman, and Scot,
“And the young British warrior ’s no more than a slave,
“He now as a slave is forgot.

“The pride of the battle to ashes are turn’d,
“And dim their once war-beaming eyes:
“The boldest, that rush’d where the hot battle burn’d,
“Fell quickly, but never to rise.

“And this is their glory—they stand as a mark,
“Firm, braving the bullets, for fame;
“They flash, like the meteor, they fall, and ’tis dark—
“To them all the blaze of a name.”

With thirst of knowledge Philo's bosom burns,
And his unsettled thoughts to Paris turns ;
But the young Muse had form'd her thorny nest,
Sweetly perfum'd, within his youthful breast.
Here he resolv'd to make remarks as true
As life itself, on ev'ry passing view.
His books he spurn'd, and open threw his mind
To read the spacious volumes of mankind ;
He saw that youths might read, and yet be fools,
Full of the modern jargon of the schools ;
But he resolv'd the varied scenes to see,
From beggars' cots to sceptred royalty.
First at Brussels he told his tale of woe,
As though his arm was lost at Waterloo ;
His empty sleeve hung dangling at his side—
In Anglo-French he told how comrades died.
At night, what varied scenes were in his view,
Mix'd with the beggars' and the gipsies' crew !
Their mournful tales were chang'd to mirth and glee,
And mendicants all join'd in harmony.
When Philo saw their mirth and fun begin,
A louis d'or he gave to purchase gin.
All instruments were tun'd that then were there,
And punch and music drowned all their care ;
Patches from eyes were torn, which then could see,
And good box-organs grinded melody.
Philo without its mask deception saw,
Amid the motley group, that laugh'd at law.

Escap'd from prison, one, disguis'd, was there,
Another was a wounded privateer ;
And there was one her infant's blood had spilt,
That Hollands deeply drank to drown her guilt.
Mirth still prevail'd, and tun'd the viol's strings—
Grief, Care, and Sorrow spread their drowsy wings,
And flew away—such sportive glee and fun
As few behold, by gipsies were begun.
Then young and old could sit not on the bench,
But danc'd—Italians, Germans, Dutch, and French.
Upon the earthen floor the wooden peg
Kept as true time as many a better leg.
To cheer young Philo's heart, and mend the scene,
Up rose three youthful gipsies, scarce eighteen ;
One touch'd the sweet guitar, and with a smile
The other danc'd, in true Italian style ;
Chords from the tambourine the third awoke—
Philo stood charm'd, their feet the music spoke.
These scenes did all the vagrants' arts explain,
With these he never wish'd to meet again ;
Then were Deception's masks all torn away—
In higher spheres he spent each future day.

When o'er Brussels dark Night had cast her shade,
Hundreds were dressing for the masquerade,
In all the varied costumes nations wear
In ev'ry clime throughout each hemisphere.

As great Apollo Philo's head was crown'd,
Who led the dance, with Muses circled round.
With grand majestic step Apollo trod—
The sons of song paid homage to the god.
First Homer came, a venerable form,
Upon his breast pourtray'd the ocean storm,
Above, the gods, descending from the sky,
Some to defend, and some to ruin Troy;
Across the poet's breast a robe was flung,
And there pourtray'd the battles that he sung.
Next ancient Hesiod, whose mighty strains
Were heard from earth to the celestial plains;
Sappho and tuneful Virgil next appear,
Horace and Pindar pay their homage there.
Then Shakespeare comes, with a majestic mien,
The trumpet's sounds the greatest bard proclaim;
Apollo bows, and reaches forth his hand,
Around the Muses and the Poets stand;
Apollo crowns him with a wreath of light,
Whereon is written, "Nature, Depth, and Height;"
Cupid is on his robe, the dying maid
Within the tomb of Capulets pourtray'd;
The field of battle, and the ocean storm,
The solemn ghost, and Ariel's fancied form;
The meeting armies, and the murder'd kings,
E'en some short sketch of all created things.
Philo, to praise the mighty bard, display'd
The noblest scene of all the masquerade;

His robes he chang'd, the merry dance he join'd
With fair French belles, as lovely as refin'd.
Thro' ev'ry stage of life he strove to pass,
Resolv'd to see how varied Nature was :
But here the youth was foolish, learn'd, and vain,
His genius drowned in the bright champagne ;
Wisdom departed, riot took her place,
And led young Philo into deep disgrace.
The scene must drop, and hide him from our sight,
With all the follies of a drunkard's night.
Learning is not true wisdom.—Youths may be
Refin'd and polish'd to a high degree ;
Genius may mark the scholar for her own,
Yet by her brightest sons is often shown
Minds that can soar in rapture to the skies,
On Learning's wings—feel noblest ecstasies,
Then sink to earth ; and, mixing with the throng,
In Folly's path with drunkards roll along.
With best of resolutions Philo came,
And deeply sigh'd, through grief and inward shame.
Oppress'd with sickness, his ideas fled,
His memory weaken'd, and an aching head ;
A ruin'd appetite, a trembling hand,
His pen obeying not his mind's command.
To drive away the melancholy train
Of dark ideas, he flew to wine again ;
An ecstasy he felt in getting drunk—
To what a depth his learned mind was sunk !

Then horror seiz'd him, and his eyes rain'd tears,
That all the learning of his youthful years,
With which his father hop'd to make him bless'd,
Should only leave his bosom more oppress'd.
Oft would his mind upon the Muses' wings
Soar to the skies, and leave all earthly things;
Beyond mortality were Philo's strains
Tun'd to the orbs that deck the heavenly plains.
He sung not love's soft passion, lovers' care,
His theme the heavens, the ocean, earth, and air;
In deepest bursts of passion he could shine,
And power and harmony fill'd every line.
With thoughts original, with words at will,
His verses made his readers' blood run chill,
But not with horror,—mid the stars he trod,
And sung th' omnipotence of Nature's God;
On wings of fancy his unfetter'd soul
Flew far as comets soar or planets roll.
Where undescrib'd Infinity had birth,
He look'd in vain for this small spot of earth,
Beheld the Almighty's power the systems guide,
Then ask'd—"What am I? What is human pride,
"What our conceptions, learn whate'er we can,
"What is the pomp, the dignity of man,
"Compar'd with Him? How mighty is the thought!
"He spoke—the worlds, the systems sprung from
nought!

“ Rolling in darkness all the heavenly spheres,
“ He says, ‘ Let there be light !’ and light appears ;
“ And when it shall be the Creator’s will,
“ A word can make the rolling orbs be still.
“ At His command the orbs burst out in flame,
“ Or fade to nothing, whence at first they came.”

At intervals, the Muse of Philo sung
In strains like these, then silent was her tongue.
The hand that holds the fatal potion shakes,
Invention’s fled, the nervous feeling wakes ;
His eyes have lost their fire, his falt’ring tongue
Speaks not in sentences so firm and strong,
His memory’s fled, invention laid at rest—
His heart-strings quiver in his weaken’d breast ;
But still the thoughts of other bards’ despair,
The sons of misery and rankling care,
Prompted a last, though enervated lay.
And this the substance of his weak essay:—

“ Where merit lives the greatest sorrow swells,
“ Fortune forsakes the spot where anguish dwells :
“ Obscure in life the man of letters mourns,
“ While hope, and care, and sorrow come by turns ;
“ Or if his reputation widely spread,
“ Oft has he starv’d, and even wanted bread,
“ Perish’d in poverty, of little note,
“ While others profited by what he wrote.

“ Poor blind Homer, the noblest bard of all,
“ Or mov’d by want, or press’d by hunger’s call,
“ Mourning in shame, he scarce durst raise his head,
“ But spoke immortal verse to gain his bread.
“ Plautus, whose verses made all ages smile,
“ A miller was—then sat, and wrote awhile ;
“ It was no shame that he, a poet born,
“ Should sometimes sing, at others, grind the corn.
“ Xylander studied at eighteen for fame,
“ His hope, his glory, was a poet’s name :
“ His notes on Dion Cassius, ev’ry line,
“ Were sold for want, that he once more could dine ;
“ Then his young vanity for ever fled,
“ He thought, he studied, how to write for bread.
“ Agrippa in a workhouse laid his head,
“ But soon they found the great Agrippa dead ;
“ Forc’d from his native valleys to depart,
“ Despair and poverty had broke his heart.
“ The tuneful Camoens sweetly strung his lyre—
“ Dimm’d was the poet’s eye, and quench’d his fire ;
“ He, who could tune his wildest notes so sweet,
“ Perish’d from hunger in the public street ;
“ Child of the Muses ! he, a poet born,
“ Found, with his broken harp, a corpse at morn !
“ Upon the bard the haughty learned gaze,
“ And those who most neglected, gave him praise.
“ He heard it not, his noble soaring mind
“ Was glad to leave such cold neglect behind.

“Tasso, in great distress, had nought to spend,
“Till he a crown had borrow'd from a friend ;
“And when in study he sat up at night,
“So poor, he oft was destitute of light ;
“But soar'd above all want, he wrote—and praise
“Has form'd his chaplet in succeeding days.
“Great Ariosto bitterly complains
“Of poets' misery, of poets' gains,
“Till great Alphonso gave a lovely spot,
“And built the bard a little rustic cot ;
“When these were done, the poet's soul was glad,
“Yet he so poor, his furniture was bad ;
“He found few riches flow from poets' strings,
“And palaces and verse are diff'rent things.
“See great Lord Burleigh, fav'rite of the queen,
“When Spencer was approaching, step between
“Her and the bard whose fame thro' lands resounds,
“Keeping the poet from the hundred pounds :
“He thought his clerks deserved more than he—
“The child of genius and of poverty.
“But Burleigh's name detested shall be read,
“Who caus'd the bard to die for want of bread.
“O, poets ! hope not favour from the great,
“These merit often cast beneath their feet.
“Savage, unfortunate, by want distress'd,
“When cares and sorrows on his bosom press'd,
“Th' eccentric 'Wand'rer' he had studied years,
“Smil'd on its lines, or wet them with his tears,

“Starving through want, no silver he nor gold,
“For poor ten pounds the beauteous poem sold ;
“And mighty Milton, who could sing of heaven,
“For his great work, had just the same sum given.
“Otway and Butler suffer’d here in time,
“One starv’d, and one imprison’d for his rhyme ;
“But Chatterton, the noble-minded youth,
“Whose genius soar’d in hyperbole or truth,
“Whose fancy mounted on her airy wings,
“As o’er the clouds he touch’d his pow’ful strings,
“Oppress’d with misery, o’ercome with care,
“Fell, early victim to a dark despair !
“A luxury he thought a single tart,
“And study and long starving broke his heart.
“He who to water got sometimes no bread,
“We see applauded when the youth is dead.
“Poor Boyce, who wrote ‘Creation,’ see him stand,
“White as the paper, while Death shook his hand !
“Cold in the garret, destitute of fire,
“Deserted by the world, in want expire.
“No crust of cheese, and not an ounce of bread
“Found in his garret, when the bard was dead !
“Here had he died in penury alone,
“O’er his worn shoulders an old blanket thrown,
“A skew’r thrust in before to keep it fast,
“And in his hand was found his pen at last !
“The tuneful Burns, old Scotia’s darling pride,
“In his youth’s bloom full prematurely died,

“Too independent was his mind to bend
“To ask a favour even from a friend ;
“He struggled hard against his adverse fate,
“And when assistance came, it came too late :
“Yet, when the harp of Burns had ceas'd its sounds,
“They heap'd upon his dust seven thousand pounds !
“I speak the truth, what ev'ry man must feel—
“This would have bought and well stocked Mossiel ;
“But poets seldom rise while here they live,
“The critics break their hearts, and then a stone they
give.”

Philo, irresolute, is still led on,
Till health, and genius, and his strength are gone.
The rosy cheek is pale, the manly face,
Where Health had stamp'd her own strong masculine
grace,
Fast shrinks away, and difficult the breath—
He feels the woeful harbingers of death.
Fain would he turn to his once healthful food,
But nought he sees can do the smallest good.
Life would die out as tapers do expire,
Did not strong spirits keep alive the fire.
His old companions, true to him when young,
Come to inquire, but when he hears each tongue,
Oh, how he weeps !—he knows what is the cause
Of his strong system making such a pause,

Wishes that all the 'spirits' e'er he drunk,
Had deep within the mighty ocean sunk.
I leave the thoughts that press upon his mind,
When he must leave his dearest love behind.
The cares of earth with him will soon be o'er,
But what a boundless ocean lies before !

Amph'rus beheld his lovely grave, but grief
Stifled his tongue, and tears gave no relief.
The solemn chords, in dirges o'er the dead,
Thrill'd through his heart, and his soft bosom bled.
The days of youth, but newly left behind,
With all their pleasures, rush'd upon his mind.
Young Philo's sister he before had lov'd—
From her his constant bosom never mov'd ;
But long had absence torn their hearts in twain,
And deep the grief when these can meet again.
With tears fair Rosabelle her sorrows spoke,
And all the sister in her bosom woke :
" Philo is now no more—oh ! Amph'rus, hear
" This last request—I make it with a tear.
" Philo, my brother, is untimely gone,
" And Paros' sand of genius too is run—
" Oh ! drink no more—stop, ere the hour come soon,
" Which makes your morning sun go down at noon !"
He heard and wept—he trembled for his fate—
He would return, but fear'd it was too late.

His looks were fresh, but appetite was lost,
His mind from music to despair was tost.
Just like a youth when running down a hill,
And shows his action and his youthful skill,
Who sees, at length, a gulph where he must drop,
But, swift his motion, and he cannot stop ;
He takes a spring to live or rise no more—
He's sav'd—his effort brings him safely o'er.
Amph'rus beheld before the gulph of death,
The grave wide yawning, his a feeble breath,
Then he forsook strong 'spirits,' drank good beer,
He lives—and yet his noble notes I hear.
When in the minster all the octaves swell,
'Tis Amph'rus' hand can touch the octaves well ;
'Tis Amph'rus' hand can touch the soothing lute,
'Tis Amph'rus on the viol or the flute.
In music Amph'rus in full splendour shines,
And, sun-like, will, if he refrain from wines.
But, oh ! what morals do the writers make !—
'Tis better far to give advice than take.

Oh ! could I write that I myself could save
From this one curse, this sure untimely grave,
This endless want, that soon must stop my breath,
These flaming draughts, which bring the surest death,
Then should my Muse upon her wings advance,
And Genius triumph o'er Intemperance.

I know there's mirth, and there's a flash of joy,
When friends with friends a social hour employ,
When the full bowl is circled all around,
And not a single jarring string is found;
But truest wisdom of a young man's heart,
Is well to know the moment to depart.
Thousands of hopeful youths, who first begin
To mix with friends in this bewitching sin,
Soon lose their resolution, and what then?
Their privilege is gone to other men,
Their wealth has wasted, and the landlord, where
They seem'd so happy with his social cheer,
When all is spent, and all resources o'er,
Soon kicks the starving wretches out of door.
I could employ my pen for weeks, for years,
Write on this subject, wet it with my tears;
For spacious as the ocean is the scope,
For drinking drowns all genius, wealth, and hope,
Lies best of characters below the dust,
And fills connexions with a deep distrust.
But in weak verse the ills can ne'er be told—
Eternity alone can these unfold.
That I may know these ills, and stop in time,
Is my last wish, as thus I end the rhyme.

REFLECTIONS

ON THE RETURN OF THE SWALLOW, 1824.

SWIFT-WING'D and pleasing harbinger of spring!
 Thou from thy winter's voyage art return'd,
 To skim above the lake, or dip thy wings
 In the sequester'd river's winding streams.
 Instinct has brought thee to the rural cot,
 From whence, with new-fledg'd wings, thou took'st thy
 flight.

Oh! could I give thee intellect and tongue,
 That thou to man might'st tell what mazes wild,
 And what eccentric circles thou hast flown
 Since thou didst soar in autumn far away!
 Cities in rising splendour thou hast seen,
 And those where solemn desolation dwells.
 Hast thou not peaceful slept the night away,
 Perch'd on the distant pyramid's high point;
 Or on some massive column's hoary top,
 Beheld great Ætna's dark sulphureous smoke,
 Then dipp'd thy wings upon the orient waves?

Like thee, could man with philosophic eye
Survey mankind, in ev'ry varying clime,
How would his mind expand ! his spacious soul,
Releas'd from bigotry and party zeal,
Would grasp the human race in ev'ry form,—
Denominations, sects, and creeds would sink,
His mind o'erpowered with the thought that He
Who form'd the universe, regards them all !

Upon this little wave-encircled isle,
What scenes diversified might he behold !
Here men of commerce, seeking after gain,
To the emporium throng, as ants haste home
When frowns the sky, and distant thunders roll ;
And there their youthful inexperienced sons,
In wide extremes of pleasure, mirth, and joy,
Heed not the cares their fathers' bosoms feel,
But carelessly carouse the night away,
Regardless of the wealth by prudence gain'd.

Some crowd the theatres, by pleasure led ;—
But where 's the theatre like nature's own ?
Where sects of various creeds, like summer flies,
Meet and re-meet, as tho' their hopes were plac'd
As widely opposite as the extremes
Of inconceivable unbounded space.
Then what is man ? think, O ye vain, ye proud !

What his achievements, glory, wealth, or fame?
Where can the hist'ry reach of all his deeds?
Scarce o'er the little mole-hill of this earth.
And what the various sects—Jews, Pagans, Turks,
With those who to the mighty Spirit bow,
The wand'ring Arabs, or the sable hordes
Who scorched dwell in Afric's torrid vales,—
Their idol gods, their temples, or their mosques,
And even Christians, with their numerous sects,
Divided, parted, and anatomiz'd,
'Till almost ev'ry man 's a different creed?—
Astonish'd, he who thinks must make them one,
And breathe a fervent pray'r,—*Heav'n bless the whole!*

All works of man, perform'd with greatest art,
Shall change, shall waste, and into ruin turn.
Where are the pristine altars and the groves;
The first rude temples, and the sacred rocks;
The hieroglyphics, and the works of priests,
Written in characters to us unknown?
Where are the walls of Babylon? or where
The glorious splendour of the Trojan courts;
Egypt's geometry, and Grecian lore;
The thrones of emperors; the crowns of kings;
The weapons of the warriors of old;
The martial airs which cheer'd the Roman hosts;
The wreaths with which the conquerors were crown'd?
All lost,—and dark oblivion wraps the whole!

The mighty Chinese empire yet may fall,
Like those of Greece, of Egypt, and of Rome.
Canton, with all its millions, may decay ;
And golden Hindostan may yet arise,
Turn from its gods,—embrace the Christian creed.

Ye narrow-minded men, whose souls are bound,
Give wings to thought, and let your fancy soar !
See the toss'd ocean leaping at the rocks,
To tear them from their stations, and engulph
The pond'rous masses in its foaming jaws !
Behold the vessels wreck'd,—the wretched crews,
Pale with dread horrors, leave their grasp and sink,
Their last faint shrieks all lost in ocean's roar !
These are your fellow-mortals, and their state,
Man with his reason, reading, wit, and all
May guess, but nought of certainty is there.

Next view the field of war,—behold the fray
On that small ant-hill, see the curling smoke,
And hear the roar which twice three leagues can drown :
Stand at a distance, and the armies fade.
Let the volcano burst, the hosts are lost,—
Smoke, lava, ashes would entomb the whole !
Or did the earthquake open its wide jaws,
Victor and vanquish'd, armour, banners, all
Would sink,—and war be silent as the grave !

Search for great Hannibal or Cæsar now ;
Where shines their grandeur ? what can we behold
But some few letters which record their names ?
Sage and philosopher, the ignorant and learn'd ;
The tyrant hated, and the prince belov'd ;
The statesman, patriot, poet, and mogul ;
The Indian chiefs, the despicable deys ;
Those who with microscopes behold the mite,
And they who calculate the comet's course,
Measure the distances of heav'nly orbs,
Number their satellites, and think they view
Islands and seas stretch'd o'er the distant spheres ;—
Kings, priests, and paupers—live, and then expire !

Had poets but thy pinions, they would soar
To taste the far-fam'd streams of Helicon ;
Artists and antiquarians, wing'd like thee,
Would fly to view the works of Grecian art,
Then soar to Atlas, or the pointed Alps,
And rest where mortal footsteps ne'er were seen :
Myriads would visit then the sacred place
Where heaven's Eternal Majesty expir'd.
But man, proud man, with all his vaunted skill,
Must travel slowly o'er this atom globe,—
Tho' wonderful his new invented things,
His art still leaves him destitute of wings.

ALAS! WHERE ARE THEY?

“ I betook myself to the repositories of the dead :—and I exclaimed in a plaintive tone, ‘ Alas! where are they?’ and Echo replied, in the same plaintive tone, ‘ Alas! where are they?’ ”—*From the Arabic.*

SOFT! behold in the shade the dark abbey appearing;
 Hark! yon sad plaintive voice,—’tis Myra the fair:
 The black robe of crape see the virgin is wearing,
 And mourns her lost lover deposited there.
 What a stillness! how solemn! ’tis awfully fine!
 Night’s queen throws the dark cloudy veil from her face,
 The ivy leaves tremble, as faintly they shine,
 And silence is now the sole lord of the place:
 ’Twas thus when fair Myra turn’d slow from the dead,
 And cried out—“ Alas! where are they?”
 Echo heard the sad sound—thro’ the cloisters she fled,
 And whisper’d in sorrow—“ Alas! where are they?”

When the pale moon was shining upon the clear river,
Sad Laura went slowly to mourn o'er the dead ;
Her husband, her son, and her daughter, for ever
Repos'd where the branches of cypress were spread.
She lean'd on the cold marble statue which stood
At the head of the tomb till she fainted away !
She reviv'd !—the tears gush'd from her eyes like a flood,
As her words burst in anguish—“ Alas ! where are
they ? ”

'Twas silent around, and no answer was heard,
But Echo, which bore the sad question away,
Ask'd the grottos, the groves, and each sorrowful bird,
In soft dying cadence—“ Alas ! where are they ? ”

To the place of the dead we may walk deeply mourning,
To sigh o'er our children, our lover, or sire,
But from the dark shades there is now no returning,—
Without them in sorrow we weep and retire.
We may gaze on the turf, or the fine-sculptur'd bust,
And sorrowful ask—“ Where are they ? ”
If a faint mournful voice seems to rise from the dust,
'Tis but soft plaintive Echo that asks—“ Where are
they ? ”

PSALM CXLVIII. PARAPHRASED.

PRAISE ye the Lord ! let songs of praise
Thro' highest heavens in chorus ring !
Ye heights, where mortals cannot gaze,
Adore your great eternal King !

Ye angels, that are cloth'd in light,
Ye hosts, which marshal at his word,
Ascribe both majesty and might,
In heav'nly concert, to the Lord !

Shine to His praise, thou glorious sun !
And thou, pale moon, at midnight hour,
Adoring, in thy orbit run,
And show thy great Creator's pow'r !

Ye comets, which are wand'ring far,
And in the wide-stretch'd ether blaze,
Tell ev'ry distant unknown star
To join ye in Jehovah's praise !

Ye stars, beheld by mortal eyes,
For ever steadfast, fix'd, and true,
The anthem join—till praise arise
From all the wide extended blue !

Ye heav'ns beyond the heav'ns, rejoice !
In praise, ye unknown oceans, roar,
Which heard at first th' Almighty's voice
Bid you to last for evermore !

Fix'd in His great eternal throne,
By an unchangeable decree,
To last when ev'ry orb is gone,
Existing thro' eternity !

Ye mountains, lift your heads on high ;
In praise towards His throne ascend !
Praise Him, ye lesser hills !—reply
In awe, ye oaks,—ye cedars, bend !

Ye fruitful trees, wave ev'ry bough,
With blossoms or with fruit array'd !
By ev'ry shrub that blooms below,
Let homage to His name be paid !

Thou earth, in songs thy glory give,—
One universal sabbath keep :
With all that in the ocean live,
The monsters in th' unfathom'd deep.

Ye clouds, that crown the mountain's brow,
Fraught with the lightning's vivid blaze,
To distant thunders, deep and low,
Echo on high his awful praise !

Ye storms of hail, that ride along,
On the wild wings of tempests borne,
Learn in the air the holy song,
And with it to the earth return !

Learn it, ye snows ! and ev'ry cloud,
That sails in grandeur on the air !
Ye whirlwinds, bear his praise abroad,
And his tremendous pow'r declare !

Lions, which in the desert roar,
And all the mighty beasts of prey,
That range the unknown forests o'er,
To Him your nightly homage pay !

Ye creeping reptiles, weak and small,
By man unnotic'd and unknown,
Show forth His skill—He form'd you all,
Ye live by Him and Him alone !

Ye larks, ascending to the sky,
Ye birds, which warble in the wood,
With all the various fowls that fly,
Tune your wild notes in praise to God !

Praise Him, ye kings, by mortals crown'd :
And ye who judge by earthly law :
Let songs in ev'ry court resound ;
Ye princes, bend your plumes in awe !

Ye youths, His sacred name adore ;
Ye maidens, on His glories gaze ;
Old men, whose earthly joys are o'er,
And infant children, shout His praise !

To God, the great eternal King,
(For He alone deserves all praise,)
Let joyful hallelujahs ring
Thro' all creation's boundless space !

The glorious lustre of the sky
Is darkness to th' eternal light
Wherein He dwells enthron'd on high,
Below all depth—above all height.

Praise Him, ye saints ! tho' last—the best ;
Ye whom He still delights to raise
To bliss, and crown you with the bless'd,
Close by His throne to sing His praise !

ON VISITING A WORKHOUSE.

ALLOW'D to walk into the sad retreat
 Where tott'ring age and foolish fair ones meet,
 I heard deep sighs from those bent down with years,
 Whose cheeks were deeply furrow'd o'er with cares.
 To see their locks, by ruthless Time turn'd grey,
 Melted my heart, and took my pride away :
 For who was seated in the corner chair,
 But one who in my youth I held most dear.
 Oft had his hand, when I was but a boy,
 Handled the knife, and made me many a toy ;
 For me he caught the sparrows on the snow,
 And made my youthful heart with raptures glow !
 Oft had I danc'd around him with delight,
 While he had balanc'd well my little kite ;
 But now, my aged friend, when he should eat,
 His palsied hands can scarcely bear his meat,—
 His pleasures lost, to life he's but a slave,
 And only waits his passport to the grave.
 Here I beheld how mortals waste away,
 Shoot up to manhood, blossom, and decay !
 In wolsy gown, close seated by his side,
 His sister Ann, of Harewood once the pride,
 Beauteous and fair,—upon her bridal day
 The wealthy countess scarce appear'd more gay ;

But the fine brow that bore the glossy hair,
Which once she dress'd with such assiduous care,
Was furrow'd o'er by Time's all-changing plough,
And her few locks were nearly white as snow.
When I had stood awhile, and dried the tear,
I spoke, but John my words could scarcely hear;
At length he cried, in exclamation strong,
"Ah! is that thee?" for still he knew my tongue.
His age-dimm'd eyes then brighten'd with a ray,
Which, like a wasted taper, died away.
Dotage had seiz'd upon his feeble brain,
As he revolv'd to infancy again.
Awhile he spoke of heav'n and things divine,
Then laugh'd—and stopp'd a moment to repine;
Wish'd for the grave,—next talk'd of things to come,
Then wept—and thought of his once happy home.
But his poor heart was most of all subdued
With daughters' pride, and sons' ingratitude.
"Alas!" said he, "that those who owe me all,
Should know me thus, and yet refuse to call
"To spend one hour, to mitigate my grief,
"To bring one cordial, or afford relief,
"Tho' they neglect a father, old and poor,
"They yet may have to enter at this door;
"Yet O, avert it heav'n! bless'd may they live!
"O teach an injur'd father to forgive!"
Touch'd with the scene, I turn'd aside to weep,
And like a child he calmly fell asleep!

MAN'S LIFE.

I'll sing no more of cheerful things,
 My lyre shall mourn in pensive strain,
 The Muse with tears shall wet her wings,
 And with her feeble voice complain :
 Grief shall her future hours employ,—
 No more her features shine with joy ;
 Each day and night will I declare,—
 Man's little life 's a life of care !

Thro' ev'ry stage of life, what woe !
 What various forms can sorrow take !
 Pleasures may charm an hour or so,
 But sorrows ever are awake !
 E'en infants, weeping at their birth,
 As if they fear'd the ills of earth,
 In feeble plaintive cries declare,—
 Man's little life 's a life of care !

How oft we see the youth at play
 Sore griev'd and weeping o'er their toys ;
 E'en in the morning of their day
 Are sorrows blended with their joys :

Then 'tis the best to take the cup,
With resignation drink it up.
Since of this truth we are aware,
Man's little life 's a life of care !

The youth on love's strong pinions soars
Far—far beyond what he can gain,
And sees the nymph his soul adores,
Reject him, heedless of his pain :
While she must feel love's painful dart,
From one who slights her in his heart.
Thus, disappointed youths declare,—
Man's little life 's a life of care !

Where is the busy tradesman's peace,
When losses after losses come ?
His rising family increase,
And ruin hastens to his home.
O'ercome with grief, he sits and sighs,
Broods o'er his sorrows in despair,
Then, weeping, to his partner cries,—
Man's little life 's a life of care !

The sire, upon his crutches stay'd,
Weaken'd by age, disease, and pain ;
His grey locks scatter'd o'er his head,
Declares the joys of earth are vain !
His joyless nights are spent in sighs,
His hearing lost, and dim his eyes,
No hopes of shortest pleasure here,
He dies—and leaves a life of care !

JANUARY.

Now bleak winter on the mountains
 Whirls on heaps the dusty snow,
Seals with ice the sandy fountains,
 While the streams can scarcely flow.

Starving grouse forsake the rushes,
 Cover'd is their winter store,
Seek for shelter in the bushes,
 While the heath is drifted o'er.

Trees beneath their loads are bending;
 Firs like ostrich plumes appear;
Partridge tame the barn attending,
 Picking up the grain with fear.

Hares the snow-drifts wander over,
 Fore'd the hawthorn buds to eat;
Lost in snow the sprigs of clover,
 Cover'd are the blades of wheat.

Now the thrasher, old and weary,
Stops the northern door with straw ;
But the tempest, wild and dreary,
Finds a way thro' ev'ry flaw.

Starv'd from woods, the beauteous pheasant
Leaves the icy boughs and mourns,
Haunts the cottage of the peasant,—
Snows may melt, it ne'er returns.

Thus the maids, their parents leaving,
Wanton to the city fly,
Soon with woes their breasts are heaving,—
Virtue, honour, beauty, die !

MAY-DAY.

SEE the nymphs in May-day dresses,
Dancing on the daisied green!
Sloe-thorn blossoms grace their tresses,
Polyanthus deck their queen.

While of thyme and unblown roses,
Twin'd among the leaves of bay,
Each a fragrant wreath composes,
On the joyful holiday.

Lyra tunes the rural measure,
While the cowslips at her feet
Dance, as if they felt the pleasure
Of her trills and cadence sweet.

See!—the lark her song suspending,
Drops and listens to the air,
While the snow-white lambs, attending,
Strive to imitate the fair.

Blithe and gay each nymph appearing,
 See, how innocent they smile !
Each a branch of myrtle bearing
 On a breast that knows no guile.

Where 's the youth that could deceive them,
 Smiling on their morn of May,
Gain their love, then scorning leave them,
 Like their garlands, to decay ?

MARY OF MARLEY.

At Marley stood the rural cot,
 In Bingley's sweet sequester'd dale,
 The spreading oaks enclos'd the spot
 Where dwelt the beauty of the vale.

Bless'd with a small, but fruitful farm,
 Beneath the high majestic hill,
 Where Nature spread her ev'ry charm
 That can the mind with pleasure fill.

Here bloom'd the maid, nor vain nor proud,
 But like an unapproach'd flower,
 Hid from the flatt'ry of the crowd,
 Unconscious of her beauty's power.

Her ebon locks were richer far
 Than is the raven's glossy plume;
 Her eyes outshone the ev'ning star:
 Her lovely cheeks the rose's bloom.

The mountain snow, that falls by night,
By which the bending heath is press'd,
Did never shine in purer white
Than was upon her virgin breast.

The blushes of her innocence
Great Nature's hand had pencil'd o'er;
And Modesty the veil had wrought
Which Mary, lovely virgin, wore.

At early morn each fav'rite cow
The tuneful voice of Mary knew;
Their answers humm'd,—then wand'ring slow,
From daisies dash'd the pearly dew.

When lovely on the green she stood,
And to her poultry threw the grain,
Ringdoves and pheasants from the wood
Flew forth and glitter'd in her train.

The thrush upon the rosy bow'r
Would sit and sing while Mary stay'd;
Her lambs their pasture frisked o'er,
And on the new-sprung clover fed.

She milk'd beneath the beech-tree's shade,
And there the turf was worn away,
Where cattle had for cent'ries laid,
To shun the summer's sultry ray.

Lysander, from the neighbouring vale,
Where Wharf's deceitful currents move,
To Mary told a fervent tale,
And Mary could not help but love.

The richest might have come and sigh'd ;
Lysander had her favour won,—
Her breast was constant as the tide,
And true as light is to the sun.

When winter, wrapp'd in gloomy storm,
Each dubious path had drifted o'er,
And whirl'd the snow in ev'ry form,
To Mary oft he cross'd the moor.

When western winds and pelting rain
Did mountain snows to rivers turn,
These swell'd and roar'd, and foam'd in vain,
Affection help'd him o'er the bourn.

Until the last, the fatal night,
His footsteps slipp'd—the cruel tide
Danc'd and exulted with its freight,
Then lifeless cast him on its side !

How chang'd is lovely Mary now !
How pale and frantic she appears !
Description fails to paint her woe,
And numbers to recount her tears.

EVENING IN APRIL.

(ON FIRST HEARING A HUMBLE BEE, 1824.)

WELCOME with thy monotone,
 Black and yellow lab'rer sweet!
 Thou this night hast nearly done
 Dancing with thy little feet
 On the willow's honied flower,
 On the daisy's crimson side,
 On the crocus near the bower,
 Which thy velvet coat has dy'd.
 Thou thy little sable bill
 Hast in April blossoms dipp'd;
 From the cups upon the hill,
 Luscious drops of honey sipp'd:
 Thou hast slept the winter long,
 But thy merit is not lost;
 Thou hast yet the vernal song,
 Spite of winter's chilling frost.
 Thus the Poet, as he sings,
 While the storm of sorrow low'rs,
 Finds that friendship gladness brings,
 Sweet as dew on honied flow'rs.

LINES WRITTEN IN SICKNESS.

LOVELY darlings! can you dry
 The sweat-drops from your father's brow?
 Can you wipe his faded eye,
 Sunk with pain and sickness low?

O! my little prattling boy,
 Gladly thou would'st ease my pain;
 Pleas'd, would'st give thy father joy,
 But thy infant arts are vain.

Must I leave you here to mourn,
 With a mother deep distress'd,
 While I to the dust am borne.
 Where this aching head shall rest?

Yes! methinks I hear you say,
 "Mother, when will father come?"
 "Why is he so long away.
 "Nor brings his weekly wages home?"

Must I leave you?—O thou Pow'r
 Supreme! who seest the orphans' tears,
 Guard them thro' each infant hour.
 Watch them in maturer years!

I WILL LOVE THEE, MARY!

WHILE the larks mount up in spring,
While the grouse sport on the ling,
While the thrush and blackbird sing,
I will love thee, Mary!

While the heat of summer glows
On each daisy, pink, and rose,—
Come sweet pleasure or deep woes,
I will love thee, Mary!

When the harvest field appears
Yellow with the golden ears,—
Bless'd with joys, or press'd with cares,
I will love thee, Mary!

In the coldest winter's frost,
On the drifted mountain lost,
Or on foaming billows toss'd,
I will love thee, Mary!

Life may waste,—but still impress'd
Are thy virtues on my breast ;
Till in death my heart shall rest,
I will love thee, Mary !

PSALM XVIII. PARAPHRASED.

(FROM VERSE 6 TO 16.)

WHEN in the temple of his God
 In sorrow Israel's monarch pray'd,
 Revenge!—the great Eternal vow'd;
 The earth—the heav'ns were sore afraid!

When frown'd the great eternal King,
 All nature trembled at His look:
 Heav'n's choristers all ceas'd to sing,
 While the eternal pillars shook!

Wild roll'd the clouds of darkest hue,
 And wrapp'd the sun in sable vest,—
 The affrighted sun his light withdrew,
 And thunders roll'd from east to west!

Earth trembled, and the ocean roar'd:
 The clouds all blush'd with cheeks of flame:
 Dread terrors veil'd the mountains o'er,
 And earthquakes shook old Nature's frame!

The bending heav'ns obeisance made.

As He on fiery cherubs rode :

Beneath His feet the darkest shade

Roll'd as a chariot for its God !

The stars had from their orbits fled,

And melted all created things,

Had not the darkness wrapp'd His head,

As high he rode on whirlwinds' wings.

The channels of the mighty deep,—

The centre of the world was bare ;

The earth—the ocean could not keep

Their stations, when their God was there !

As heralds He the lightnings sent,

The thunder was His trumpet strong ;

Devouring clouds before Him went,—

Hail, fire, and storms flew swift along !

His enemies His arrows felt,

And as a shadow fled away ;

Thus Israel's foes to nothing melt,

When faithful to their God they pray.

MELPOMENE.

THE Tragic Muse, in sable mantle dress'd,
 Majestically great above the rest,
 With thoughtful look, and tears, and pallid cheek,
 A comic line is scarcely heard to speak ;
 For higher themes her feeling breast inspire
 Than lyric measures or the keen satire.
 The widow's woes,—the virgin's love, she sings,
 The fate of heroes, and the fall of kings ;
 On palaces in ruins, where the throne
 Which now is broke, with regal grandeur shone ;
 Where once the beauteous chequer'd marble floor
 With blood of kings was deeply crimson'd o'er ;
 There like a widow on her husband's tomb,
 She sits enshrin'd amid the tragic gloom,—
 Paints ev'ry scene of ancient tyrants' deeds,
 Then gazes on the ruins cloth'd in weeds,
 Till her rich mind replaces ev'ry stone,
 And seats the murder'd monarch on the throne,
 Musters his guards—which long in dust have been,
 Beholds his knights, his heroes, and his queen :

Sees the vile traitor, with his murd'ring train,
Act all his deeds of darkness o'er again :
The courtiers lov'd to-day, and rais'd on high,
Frown'd on to-morrow, and their glories die :
The dauntless heroes, mark'd with many a scar.
Rush on in search of glory to the war,
And on their arms the dread suspended fates
Of empires, kingdoms, or contending states ;—
Shrouded in terrors, while around her plays,
In ev'ry form, the lightning's vivid blaze.
Wading in blood, she marks the hero's fall,
While with her crimson pen she minutes all.
When to the charge the furious steeds advance,
And red with noble blood the glitt'ring lance—
The drums, the trumpets, and the clang of arms,
The rattling mail, and war's most dread alarms ;
The banners waving over either host,
The day hung doubtful—neither won nor lost :
The smoking tow'rs, the city wrapp'd in fire,—
With loftier themes, the 'Tragic Muse inspire—
With noise of battle plumes her tow'ring wings,
And gives terrific grandeur while she sings !

LINES ON "LONG TOM,"

BRAMHAM PARK.

O GREAT LONG TOM! when thou with foam art crown'd,
 Thou stretchest care and anguish on the ground;
 Despair thou buriest deep within the grave;—
 Thy contents sure would make the coward brave.
 When gloomy Winter, with her roaring floods,
 Sends her fierce tempests through the leafless woods,
 When sleet falls cold and when the night is dark,
 Fill me *Long Tom* with ale from Bramham Park.
 Across the moors I then could cheerly go,
 Though the cold sleet should change to whirling snow,
 In sharpest frost I yet should take no harm—
 In spite of all, *Tom's soul* would keep me warm.
 When verdant Spring first dons her virgin shift,
 And ploughmen hear the skylark in the lift,
 Send them *Long Tom*, and they would sing so loud.
 The larks would stop to listen in the cloud.
 If from its verge could sip the mellow thrush,
 How strong his notes upon the topmost bush :

All nature's songsters, could they drink from thee,
Would cheer the groves with louder harmony.
When Summer comes with all her scorching fires,
And on his way the thirsty traveller tires,
Tho' sweat fall from his locks like drops of rain,
Thy soul would cheer him till he walk'd again.
In Autumn, when the sportsman hastes away
With dogs and gun to spend a cheerful day,
When weary, he would better hit his mark,
Had he thy contents brought from Bramham Park.
In Winter thou art good to kill the frost,
Through circling years thy merits never lost ;
If war should ever rage, or Britons fight
For Albion's monarch, or their country's right,
That ancient British courage may not fail,
Fill them such horns, with such as Fox's ale :
Then would their bosoms need no more t' inspire
Their souls to fight with true heroic fire,
Rapid as whirlwinds they would sweep along,
Vanquish the weak—and terrify the strong.
May British tars for ever have such ale,
While e'er a breeze can bend each noble sail ;
Then would the cannons roar till every wave
Curl'd back and own'd itself Britannia's slave :
May none disloyal, no dishonest hand,
Touch thee, O *Tom!* while here thou hast thy stand.
But shouldst thou ever any soul inspire,
Just cheer'd, not drunk, but warm'd with honest fire,

With grateful bosom may he walk along,
And never be too drunk to give a song.

How I could write, wert thou but hither borne,
Full as I saw thee on the opening morn,
When slow thy contents lessen'd every draught,
And those who knew thy pow'r stood by and laugh'd!
Then Freedom brought the tear to either eye,
And fill'd the humble Bard with ecstasy.
For generations, firm as Eldwick rocks,
Be thou the far-fam'd mighty horn of Fox.

THE FAITHFUL WIFE.

FROM times of ancient Greece, the fair
 By greatest poets have been sung,—
 The virgins with the lovely air,
 And all their beauties fresh and young ;

But praises greater far are due
 To her who braves the storms of life,
 In ev'ry state her bosom true—
 At ev'ry age the faithful wife.

How many nymphs have gain'd the praise
 When blithe sixteen upon them shone ;
 But soon the transient bloom decays,
 And ev'ry outward beauty's gone.

While she who in her bosom bears
 A spark of virtue's sacred fire,
 Which like the purest gem appears,
 When love's impetuous flames expire,

Is lovelier far when pale and cold—
 She falls like autumn's ripen'd grain ;
 Our mem'ries then her worth unfold,
 And wish her here to shine again.

MORNING IN MAY.

THE cascade's white mist o'er the trees is uprearing
 Its white curling head from the valley below,
 The bright glitt'ring dew-drops, like emeralds appearing,
 All waken at once with Aurora to glow!

The dark low'ring tempests of winter are over,
 And sweet is the breath of the high mountain gale;
 The hare leaves her favourite fields of white clover,
 And starts as she treads the dry leaves in the vale.

The rooks and the ring-doves are flown to the fallow;
 From their dew-sprinkled pillows the daisies awake;
 From the thatch of the cottage skims forth the swift
 swallow,
 And strikes into circles the smooth polish'd lake.

Near the stream the winds move not the weak waving
 willow;
 The cattle are laid on the bright dewy hill;
 On the clear rippled stream hush'd to rest ev'ry billow,—
 The day-busy sons of the hamlet are still.

Hark! the birds are all chanting their song of the morning,
Ye virgins inviting to fields deck'd with dew!
The fresh op'ning flowers will greet your returning,
And bow their sweet heads in pure homage to you.

Blithe Health on the mountain sits smiling thus early,
With young Vernal Sweetness, her sister, in green,
While Virtue, their mother, who loves them so dearly,
Points out to her daughters the beautiful scene.

They call on the youths and the innocent lasses
To see the rich beauties of Nature half dress'd,
Forget all their joy-killing grief as it passes,
Live happy and love, for such moments are bless'd.

They sit on the hill where the bullfinch is bending,
In beautiful plumage, the weak birchen bough;
With gay feather'd songsters their mellow notes blending,
In sweet rural chords, where the sloe blossoms grow.

But to sing of the rich varied landscape before us,
With all the fine beauties that Nature displays,
Requires all the Muses to join in the chorus,
And sweet smiling cherubs to chant in its praise!

ELEGY

ON THE DEATH OF LORD BYRON.

THE greatest Bard is fall'n that ever strung
 The mighty lyre, which swell'd from hell to heav'n,—
 The sweetest minstrel mute that ever sung,
 Since from the skies Apollo's harp was given!

Tho' little minds may not lament his fall,
 Nor bring one flow'r to form the mournful wreath—
 He needs no wreath! for Fame has wove it all;
 Wet with her tears—it blossoms at his death!

Its amaranthine leaves thro' time shall bloom,
 Beyond the reach of Envy's ruthless hand!
 Love, Liberty, and Genius guard his tomb,
 And weeping there shall Grecian Freedom stand.

He sung of storms. and of the tempest wave,—
 No theme on earth his mighty pen pass'd by;
 From victory's height—down to the warrior's grave,
 From earth's dark centre to the lofty sky!

Ye minor bards, unstring the feeble lyre!
 Nor strive in Byron's lofty verse to mourn:
 Four mighty poets only had the fire*
 Fit to inscribe the lines beneath his urn!

* Homer, Virgil, Shakespeare, and Milton.

LINES

SPOKEN AT THE ANNIVERSARY MEETING AT LEEDS,
TO CELEBRATE THE BIRTH-DAY OF BURNS, 1826.

LEARNING has many a rhymers made,
To flatter near the throne,
But Scotia's genius has display'd
A poet of her own.

His lyre he took to vale and glen,
To mountain and the shade ;
Cent'ries may pass away, but when
Will such a harp be play'd ?

His native strains each bard may try,
But who has got his fire ?
Why. none—for Nature saw him die,
Then took away his lyre.

And for that lyre the learned youth
May search the world in vain :
She vow'd she ne'er would lend it more
To sound on earth again ;

But call'd on Fame to hang it by—
She took it with a tear,
Broke all the strings to bind the wreath
That Burns shall ever wear.

LOVE ON THE HEATH.

ON the heath-vestur'd hills, where I courted my Sally,
 Like stars was the bloom on the cranberry stalk ;
 The wild birds, unknown to the throng-peopled valley,
 Were all that could see us or listen our talk.

The pale yellow moss on the side of the mountain,
 Far softer than velvet, invited our stay ;
 And there by the rock, from whose foot gush'd the
 fountain,
 We, innocent, lov'd the sweet moments away.

How oft she would say, when sat happy together,
 “ 'Tis thee—and thee only I ever can love ! ”
 With breath far more sweet than the bloom on the
 heather,
 Her eyes far more comely than those of the dove.

How oft has she vow'd, while we walk'd o'er the rushes,
 With me, and me only she'd wander so far,
 Then bent down her head with such beautiful blushes,—
 'Twas Modesty's hand that had painted them there.

On the heath thus we lov'd, and our love so delicious—
If heaven e'er bless'd any mortals below,
It gave them such moments, unknown to the vicious,
Which only in innocent bosoms can glow!

But, oh! how the pleasures of mortals are clouded,
For Sally, the heather-bells blossom no more!
With the cold robe of death my charmer is shrouded,
And I on the heath must behold her no more!

LINES WRITTEN AT GOIT-STOCK.

HAIL, thou sequester'd rural seat,
Which ever beauteous dost appear,
Where the sweet songsters oft repeat
Their varied concerts, wild and clear !

Upon thy crystal-bosom'd lake
Th' inverted rocks and trees are seen,
Adorn'd with many a snowy flake,
Or in their leafy robes of green.

O could a rural rhymers sing
The beauteous scenes so richly dress'd,
Where piety may plume her wing,
And sweet seclusion form her nest !

Here may the contemplative mind
Trace Nature and her beauties o'er,
And meditation rest inclin'd,
To hear the neighbouring cataract roar.

Here, tir'd of the gay scenes of life,
The sire may see his children play,
While heav'n has bless'd him with a wife,
Who smiles his happy hours away.

If ever fairies tripp'd along,
Or danc'd around in airy mirth,
They surely to this place would throng,—
Or else they never danc'd on earth.

The Loves and Graces here might stay;
Th' enamour'd pair, with bosoms true,
Unseen appoint the nuptial day,
Among those scenes for ever new.—

The poet tune his rustic lyre,
If genius trembled on the strings;
And merit modestly aspire,
Where friendship dwells to plume his wings.

O that I could this tribute pay,
As 'tis upon my heart impress'd!
My song of friendship here would stay,
When waves the grass above my breast.

THE MAID OF LOWDORE.

THE crest of dark Skiddaw was misty and dreary,
The winds roar'd aloud near the hoarse raven's nest,
The strongest with reaching its top would be weary,
And, like the young lover, be wishful to rest,—

The lover that wander'd, his breast with love burning
For Anna, the beautiful maid of Lowdore,
Who watched the clouds as she wish'd his returning,
But night came too soon—he returned no more.

Beneath him the dark mist roll'd rapid in motion ;
Above was the evening star seen thro' the cloud ;
But the mist was as fatal to him as the ocean,
When seas wash the lost from the wave-beaten shroud.

A wand'rer he roam'd where the curlew was screaming,
Till he heard the deep roar of the lone mountain flood ;
Of danger approaching he little was dreaming,
Tho' on the high verge of dire terror he stood.

He thought on his Anna, with earnest endeavour
To reach the blest spot that his soul doth adore :
He steps—shrieks, and falls!—but the shepherd can never
Return to his love at the falls of Lowdore.

His Anna now nightly sits list'ning with wonder,
To hear in the tempest the high cataract's roar ;
And thinks she can hear, in the midst of its thunder,
Her shepherd call "Anna, the Maid of Lowdore!"

THE DESERTED MAID.

To some gloomy cave will I wander away,
Where waterfalls foam through each cleft,
And there shun the light of the pleasant spring day,
Since I by my lover am left.

There hang, ye dried ferns, in the sad dampy shade,
Ye owls, fly around me in scorn.
As ye hoot at a maid by her lover betray'd,
Whose features with weeping are worn.

O! let not a flower be seen in the field,
Nor daisies spring up near my feet;
Thou beautiful hill, no more primroses yield,
Where my lover and I used to meet.

Ye eglantines, keep your sweet scent in the bud,
Nor throw it away to the wind;
Ye hyacinths, blossom no more in the wood,
Where I on his bosom reelin'd.

No more can you its ancient arms behold,
Wither'd by time, and crumbling into mould.
Its infancy, its youth, and manhood past,
Tho' heart of oak, 'tis forc'd to yield at last.
But had it liv'd in Studley's peaceful shades,
Nor delvers' mattocks, hammers, or their spades
Had e'er been rais'd by the unfeeling clown,
To strike this only ancient vestige down.
Had it been mine, it should not yet have dropp'd,
But, where 'twas weak, I had its weakness propp'd;
Told o'er its story to the feeling breast,
And kept the tree while Bradford keeps its crest.
But why lament? since Nature says that all
That springs from earth, to earth again must fall.
So must the stately tow'rs of polish'd stone
Tumble to earth, and wear a mossy crown;
While nettles form their canopies of state,
And rankest weeds but mock their change of fate.
The sculptur'd marble monuments decay,
And crowns, and thrones, and statues fade away.
The mighty monarch and the warrior brave,
The greatest sultan and the meanest slave,
The wretched miser and most beauteous fair,
The rich possessor and succeeding heir,
Princes and courtiers, chiefs of ev'ry state,
Both high and low, must all submit to fate:
So, rest in peace, fam'd Oak, tho' doom'd to fall,
For such a mighty change awaits us all!

ON LOVE.

THE love, how true—the love, how sweet,
 That is in youth begun,
 When innocence and beauty meet,
 Which never lov'd but one!

No anxious doubts, no jealous fears,
 Disturb the constant breast :
 The faithful youth, whose vows are truth,
 With one alone is bless'd.

Let other suitors come—her heart
 From him she never moves ;
 Nor aught on earth but death can part
 Her soul from him she loves.

If angels smile at aught on earth,
 They smile on love like this,
 Whose origin 's of heav'nly birth,—
 The crown of mortal bliss!

The sweetest flow'r that blooming grows
Amongst the thorns of care ;
The balm that heals our bosoms' woes,
And yields contentment there.

Such is that love that heav'n bestow'd
To make its creatures bless'd,
And such in our first parents glow'd,
When Eden they possess'd.

THE STORM.

WHEN gentle breezes kiss the tide,
And waft the vessel o'er the deep,
Silent beneath her stately side,
The peaceful waters seem to sleep.

The trembling waves just heave along,
While swift she cuts the yielding main,
To reach the port—their hopes are strong
That they their long-left home shall gain.

But gath'ring clouds the sun o'erspread,
While he with crimson gilds the west;
The storm appears, whose awful head
With terror chills each sailor's breast.

The frightened billows seem to know
The dreadful tempest, ere it comes;
And, where the whirling hail descends,
The frothy sea in madness foams.

Nearer and nearer rolls the storm,
And wraps in darkness all the sky;
While o'er its frowning awful cheek,
The quick tremendous flashes fly.

The azure arch is seen no more ;

But, wrapp'd in deepest gloom of night,
The waves return, the thunders roar,
And lightnings flash,—their only light !

Then buried deep beneath the waves,
The shatter'd rigging and the shrouds,
While, mad with rage, the tempest raves—
Her helm is lost among the clouds.

No steady course the vessel keeps,
By such a dreadful tempest driv'n ;
But, like a cork upon the deeps,
Uplifted by the waves to heav'n.

What fervent pray'rs, in that dread hour,
For worlds unknown, they all prepare !
And to appease the Almighty Pow'r,
Is ev'ry trembling seaman's care.

At last she strikes—and floats no more,
But sinks a wreck amidst the deep ;
And, far from England's happy shore,
Beneath the waves the sailors sleep.

In vain their friends, with bosoms true,
Expect with joy their blest return,
For them no more their friends shall view,
But for their loss in anguish mourn.

FAIRY SONG.

LET us trip in airy dances,
While the weary mortals sleep ;
See the waning orb advances,
Lighting those that vigils keep.

In the nectar drown all trouble,
Sweeten'd by the honied bee ;
Make a punch-bowl of a bubble,
Underneath our fav'rite tree.

We have not the cares of mortals ;
Nature's self our tailor is ;
Sorrow enters not our portals,
All a fairy's nights are bliss.

Some fine peacock's lovely feather,
Brightest that was ever seen,
With its edge adorn'd with heather,
Forms a carpet for our Queen.

Stop the dance, a beetle's coming,
We must take his sable wing;
Stop his flight and mournful humming,
He must arm the Fairy King.

Now a moment's mirth and dancing,
We of songs have got no more;
When the moon's so high advancing,
Shows the fairy dance is o'er.

Wings of insects on the river,
We can borrow when we please;
Then we fly away for ever,
To the shades of joy and peace.

ON RETURNING FROM LONDON.

How oft the glorious morning broke
On rock-crown'd hills—Time's paintings grey,
When from his bed the lark awoke,
And warbled to the clouds his lay.

The hills rejoice—with glory blush,
Like gold the crystal rivers shine,
The blackbird carols with the thrush,—
Sweet Bingley vale, such scenes are thine ;

And such they were when all its woods
Had bow'd not to the woodman's stroke,
When salmon in its winding floods,
The smooth still deeps to surges broke.

Give me a cot, a garden near,
By kindred silent in the tomb ;
Should greatest monarchs ask me where,
I'd answer this shall be my home.

The works of art I oft have seen,
The touches of a master's hand,
But never like the hills so green,
Or Alpine rocks of Cumberland.

See the pale features of the town,
With all their fine exterior grace,
'Tho' deck'd with jewels and a crown,
To Yorkshire lasses must give place.

Then be content, 'tis e'er the best,
From wives, from neighbours, ne'er remove ;
It takes long years to try the breast,
Then who can judge a stranger's love.

The eagle mounting to the sun,
While on the rocks the ravens cry,
As goats along the ledges run,
And falcons perch with piercing eye.

These have we seen, and may we long
Gaze on our native hills and vales ;
And listen to the rural song,
And smile to hear our children's tales.

ON THE DEATH OF HIS CHILD, IN LONDON.

A SOLEMN scene was here !
 Absorb'd in anguish wild,
 Weeping upon the bier,
 Of his departed child
 The father stood—parental grief was there,
 He kiss'd the corse—a prey to sad despair.

Oh Death ! oh cruel Death !
 In fearful garb array'd,
 How could'st thou snatch the breath
 Of life from that sweet babe.
 See, see thy victim ! on her cold pale face
 A smile yet dwells, tho' clasp'd in thy embrace.

Clos'd are those sparkling eyes ;
 Fled is my baby's bloom ;
 Her cherub form now lies
 Enshrouded for the tomb.
 Martha is gone, she's breath'd her last, her thread
 Of life is spun, is snapp'd ; the babe is dead.

Angels ! take her soul above,
 And, as you bear her thro' the sky,
 Sing a seraph's song of love,
 A song of heav'nly harmony.
 Now let celestial music sound,
 Strike, strike the lyre ; ye heav'nly choir !
 Angelic music breathe around.

WRITTEN AT TONG HALL,
ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARRIAGE OF
COL. AND MRS. TEMPEST.—1829.

ALL the joys of months and years
Shall this day remember'd be ;
While old Sorrow, with her cares,
Sinks in past eternity.

Some have in the tempest sunk,
Deep within the ocean's bed ;
Others with proud fame been drunk,
Shone an hour, the next have fled.

But the stars which smiling shone
On your horoscope of birth,
Circling find you both as one ;
None can sever you on earth.

And as days and years go round,
Like two strings in unison,
Trembling to affection's sound,
True as when it first begun.

Parents of a happy race !
May your children's children shine,
Till each orb has chang'd its place,
And the world be all divine.

TO A FRIEND.

WHERE 's my harp my soul to cheer?

Its tones were wont to glad my breast;
Where 's my friend, who dried each tear,
Encourag'd me, and I was blest?

Is he gone? my only stay,
On whom my brightest hopes were plac'd;
Is that friendship fled away,
And its heavenly form defac'd?

Has some action, undesign'd,
Quench'd the spark that once was bright?
Or my wild eccentric mind
Thrown a veil 'twixt me and light?

Friendship! O, thou glorious star!
Tho' deeply clouded, yet appear;
Wander not from me so far,
Nor leave me thus oppress'd with care.

But if thou art for ever fled,
In darkness I am left to mourn;
Pleasure, hope, and comfort dead,
And rapture never can return.

THE DYING LOVER.

Alas! soon, sweet maid, this heart of mine,
Will give its beating o'er:
This weary aching head recline
Upon thy breast no more.

These hands can pluck no more for thee
The heather's purple bloom;
No more must I accompany
My lovely Mary home.

But, hush!—those sighs of fragrant breath;
The lovely crystal tear,
Can no impression make on Death,
Or keep me longer here.

Go, touch thy sweet piano's strings,
And chant me into rest,
Till angels come, and on their wings
Convey me to the blest.

And mourn not as I soar away
To tune my harp on high;
Useless the tears upon my clay,
For I'm prepar'd to die.

THE HUNTER'S DIRGE.

YE woods in Rishworth's verdant vale,
 Which oft have echo'd to the horn!
 Ye rocky hills, that blush'd so deep,
 From hunters gay at early morn!

Weep till your tears in crystal rills
 Make winding Aire with grief run o'er,
 That on the brown-rob'd heathy hills,
 The huntsman's shout is heard no more.

Ye Nimrods old, who heard the sounds
 By changing echoes borne away,
 Who cross'd the moors in joyful chase,
 And pleasure, on the sportive day!

Go sit, where you unearth'd the fox,
 And mourn till Echo hear and weep:
 Wet, with your tears, the time-worn rocks—
 That modern squires no huntsmen keep.

Mourn o'er great Parker's ancient race ;
Round Marley Hall in sorrow tread :
Where dwelt the glory of the chase,
Who oft the noble sportsmen led.

Then take the horn, the requiem blow,
O'er rural bliss that now is lost,
And sound the dirge o'er those laid low,
Who never sigh'd at hunting's cost !

ON BINGLEY.

THY beauties, Bingley ! never have been sung ;
 Thy scenes employ'd nor poet's pen nor tongue :
 Description has not smil'd within thy vale,
 Nor learning told one sympathetic tale ;
 Thy woods neglected in the poet's verse ;
 All have forgot thy beauties to rehearse.
 Of all the learned youths whom thou hast sent
 To distant seas, or some far continent,
 Tho' these on thee have thought in other climes,
 All have forgot to praise thee in their rhymes.
 When on thy beauteous vale I stand to gaze,
 Then is my mind convinc'd thou wants no praise ;
 Thy hanging woods, thy fountains, and thy bow'rs,
 Thy dashing floods, thy landscapes, and thy flow'rs,
 Thy bold grey rocks, thy heathy purple fells,
 Where silence, solitude, and beauty dwells ;
 Where faithful honest virtue long has been,
 Or love unchang'd, the glory of the scene.
 These scenes should plume the poet's tow'ring wings,
 And friendship aid him as he thinks and sings :—
 Religion, virtue, sisters, come and stay,
 To teach her beauties virtue's sacred way,
 Their minds instruct. their innocence protect,
 Their manners soften, and their paths direct ;

Let them be like the turtles of the wood,
That dip their bills in Aire's meandering flood ;
Then fly away, by sorrow not oppress'd,
While sunbeams glitter on each virtuous breast.
Innate the principle of truth and love,
Pure as the plumage of the turtle dove,
Sweet as the flow'rs when bending to the sun,
Are Bingley's daughters when they love but one.
We have the mountain breeze, the cold pure spring,
The woods where ev'ry British bird doth sing,
Wild plants and flow'rs, wild birds, and scenes as wild,
Or soft as any on which nature smil'd,
Beauteous and lovely, as the moon is fair,
And pure as ether are the nymphs of Aire.
The weeping birch, the great majestic oak,
Where dark green ivy forms a winter's cloak ;
The purple heath, where dappled moorcocks crow ;
The sylvan vales, with limping hares below,
Where sits the pleasant beauty of the wood,
As spotted trouts fly swiftly thro' the flood.
For finer walks, for more sequester'd bow'rs,
For cooler grottos, and for richer flow'rs,
For streams that wind more beautiful along,
For birds with louder chorus to their song,
For all that gen'rous nature can bestow,
All Yorkshire scenes to Bingley vale must bow.
Beauty has kept great nature in the plan,
If there's one fault 'tis poor ungrateful man.

FROM A MOTHER

TO HER DAUGHTER, IN LONDON.

How thoughtful oft I sit alone,
 My only child, and think of thee;
 I bear thee to th' Almighty's throne,
 Whene'er in pray'r I bow the knee.

A mother's blessings and her pray'rs,
 Are more than words can e'er express:
 A father's love, a father's cares,
 Tho' less display'd, are still no less.

The midnight hour oft comes and goes,
 And tells the death of each short day,
 I hear it oft before I close
 Mine eyes, while thou art far away.

But why should I o'er this complain?
 For many a friend and God is there:
 Thou art not lost amid the main.
 As many a mother's daughters are.

Thou hast not with the worthless fled,
On folly's miserable way ;
No word arrives, " Your Betsy 's dead,"
In distant climes, far, far away.

But, blest with health, O let us praise
The Lord ! and not repine and mourn ;
For swiftly pass away the days,
Which bring my daughter's dear return.

Then shall I hear again her strings,
And many a pleasant hour employ,
As Time flies sweetly on his wings,
And evenings pass away with joy.

When there is so much good and ill,—
O may the good by her be lov'd !
May heav'nly wisdom guide her will,
And may she bring a mind improv'd.

LOVE.

WILD 's the night, my love, my Mary !

But I promis'd thee to meet ;

Winds and rain they sound so dreary,

Yet thou listen'st for my feet !

Dark the woods which lie between us,

High the rocks I have to pass,

Where the nymphs and swains have seen us,

Each one happy with his lass.

Frail 's the plank across the river,

Slipp'ry with a night of rain ;

One false step—I'm gone for ever,

Ne'er to meet my love again ;

Swoll'n the streams of ev'ry fountain,

Trackless is the stormy moor,

Capp'd with mist the lofty mountain

Which I have to wander o'er.

Tho' the winds be cold and dreary,
I have promis'd thee to meet ;
If I reach my love, my deary,
'Twill but make our bliss more sweet !

What the rocks or misty mountains ?
What the darkness of the woods ?
What the roaring of the fountains,
Tho' the rills be swoll'n to floods ?

What the trackless moor or river,
Tho' some demon should appear ?
Can those stop me ? O no,—never !
Three short hours will land me there.

Then my plaid I will throw o'er me,
Sing of Mary on the way ;
Tho' great dangers lie before me,
Yet I cannot, will not stay.

DIRGE.

BLEST may my children be,
 When death shall carry me
 Into eternity,
 Ne'er to return;
 When the fast-falling tear
 Drops on their father's bier,
 May some true friend be near,
 While they all mourn.

I now have had my prime,
 Till there is nought in time
 But Care's high hill to climb,
 Weary and faint;
 Pleasure is fled away,
 Grief is resolv'd to stay
 With me by night and day,
 Terrors to paint.

What is bright glory's beam?
 Why, 'tis an empty dream,
 Or as the meteor's gleam
 Crossing the sky.

Can riches pleasures bring?
No—cares oppress a king:
All earthly joys but sting
 Deep as they fly.

Nothing but virtue can
Give comfort unto man,
Whose life is scarce a span,
 Wasting away:
Honour is but a shade,
Like beams on rain display'd,
Whose colours quickly fade,
 Ere ends the day.

Thus shall our sorrows end:
May we have one great Friend,
Through whom we can ascend
 Far beyond pain;
There may my children come,
May we all find a home,
Far, far beyond the tomb,
 In bliss to reign.

THE DREAM.

How soft, how cheerful, sound yon bells
 Within my native vale ;
And ev'ry tone sweet echo tells,
 That flies along the dale !

And thus, my Henry, shall they sound
 When we together join,
And Hymen has our wishes crown'd,
 And thou art ever mine.

Contentment, hovering on his wings,
 Shall at the wedding be ;
And viols, with their tuneful strings,
 Shall trill sweet harmony.

The hautboy and the shepherd's flute,
 Shall breathe a joyful air ;
The dulcimer and mellow lute,
 Shall swell the octaves there.

The nymphs, and all the cheerful Nine,
Unseen, shall each inspire ;
While Bacchus brings the choicest wine,
And Vesta lights the fire.

The virgins, with their tresses bound
By many a wreath of flow'rs,
Shall wish their youths like mine were found,
And all their bliss like ours.

The world that day may roll away ;
But all, so blest with love,
Shall scarcely know the eve from day,
Nor think the moments move.

Thus thought the maid—'twas truth she spoke,
As she in raptures slept ;
But, disappointed, when she woke,
That all was air—she wept.

FEMALE CONSTANCY.

STARS thro' rolling cent'ries shine,
 Nor does their lustre ever fade ;
 And thus the virtues of the maid
 Glitter when her form's decay'd,
 With beauteous radiance divine,—
 Who never sigh'd to any swain
 But one, and constant doth remain.

Still rememb'ring him with care,
 Before the Maker of the spheres
 She breathes for him incessant pray'rs,
 And not another youth appears,
 That wounds the bosom of the fair :
 And can the youth deceive such love,
 And conscience never once reprove ?

Maids to flow'rs have been compar'd,
 But flow'rs of sweetest scent decay :
 So doth the fair who runs astray
 From Virtue's sweet sequester'd way,
 Whose heart to many a youth is shar'd ;
 While she who true thro' life has been,
 Falls like a branch of evergreen.

THE DEATH OF A YOUNG LADY.

WEEP, all ye birds, ye bow'r's ;
 Ye friends, a vigil keep ;
 Send forth your tears, ye flow'rs,
 Let all who knew her weep,
 That she is gone who in your circle smil'd,
 Far from her husband, from her lovely child !

The lov'd, the virtuous wife,
 Has enter'd into rest,
 Too weak for cares of life,
 Call'd to her Father's breast ;
 While like a cherub her sweet babe appears,
 And smiles, unconscious of a father's tears.

Her bounty cheer'd the poor,
 Her hands the needy fed ;
 Now all her pains are o'er,
 Now that sweet flow'r is dead,
 And her glad spirit flown on seraph's wings,
 To strike the Christian's harp where David sings.

SONG.

THE birks may wave, the heath may bloom,
The lasses trip the mountains o'er,
And deck their breasts with blossom'd broom,
But I can touch my harp no more.

The lambs may skip, the fishes sport,
And glitter in their woodland rills,
But I no more the muse can court,
Where thyme perfumes the purple rills.

There oft my sweet Elvina sung,
And softly trill'd the rural lay,
Till raptures in my bosom sprung,
As pleasure wing'd my hours away.

But Nature now is fresh in vain,
The richest gifts to me are poor,
For bliss can never come again,
And I can touch my harp no more.

No more with joy can I behold

Elvina, deck'd with heather bloom :

The hand which oft I press'd is cold,

The heart that lov'd me in the tomb.

But still she lives in realms of day,

Far distant from a world of pain :

O! could I soar to her away,

Then would I touch my harp again.

SOLEMN REFLECTIONS.

My life wastes away, o'erburden'd with care ;
 My days are o'erclouded with gloom ;
 I'm lost thro' the night—on the verge of despair,
 And shudder to think on the tomb.

When backward I look, nought but folly and sin
 Have been my employment below ;
 I've err'd from the way I should have walk'd in,
 And run in the high road to woe.

The strength of my passions has hurried me on,
 Until I am far run astray ;
 I'm afraid ev'ry beam of that mercy is gone,
 And my bosom too harden'd to pray.

Shall the blessings, the threat'nings, the sermons, I've
 heard,
 Against me in judgment arise ?
 Or in vain mortal pride shall I question thy word,
 Which points to a crown in the skies ?

The time soon will come when all volumes I've read
Will be lost in the thoughts of the grave :
And my tongue, which so many light verses has said,
Will be asking for mercy to save—

To save a lost soul, which has fled from the road
Wherein it once ran with delight,—
Which has sought lying vanities rather than God,
And, like Sampson, is robb'd of his might.

If yet there is mercy, O bid me return
To Him who is mercy above !
In deepest repentance, O Lord ! let me mourn,
And this rock from my bosom remove.

THE NEW CHURCH AT WILSDEN.

WHAT temples, various, since old Time began,
 Have on this little globe been rear'd by man !
 What different kinds of gods been worshipp'd here,
 Since earth, new form'd, was balanc'd in the sphere !
 Some ere the pointed pyramids arose,
 In lands remote, which scarce a modern knows.
 The sumptuous Jewish temples—where are they,
 Which seem'd to scorn old ruin and decay ?
 When cost was nought,—and Asia at command
 Brought forth its treasures to the builder's hand :
 But now—would Europe golden millions give
 One column from those fabrics to receive,
 'Tis all in vain,—no stone nor Hebrew bust,
 But cent'ries since have been reduc'd to dust !
 All the old temples built when Hesiod sung,
 And those which stood when Homer's harp was strung,
 Are cover'd o'er with herbage or with trees,
 And not one stone the antiquary sees.
 The abbeys where "Te Deum" oft was sung,
 And where the instruments of music rung,

Where "Venite Exultemus" us'd to rise
In praise devout, ascending to the skies,
Are cloth'd with ivy in its solemn green,
And modern artists pencil o'er the scene;
Successive storms the tow'rs in furrows wear,
And on their columns dampy sweats appear;
The creeping shrubs upon the arches grow,
Suspended o'er the humbler weeds below;
And high engrav'd upon the time-worn scroll,
Scarce legible, the words, "Pray for the soul;"
The grass waves wildly on the broken wall,
And ev'ry year some time-worn fragments fall.

Not so with thee, thou Church, so fair and new,
White as the polish'd marble to the view.—
Ere any stone is loosen'd from thy wall,
New states shall rise and present empires fall!
Perhaps, like Greece, old Albion shall decay,
Ere those fine columns shall be worn away;
Its commerce and its glory be no more,
And science fled to some far distant shore.
With lofty trees thou may'st be circled round,—
And here the deep-ton'd organ yet may sound.
A town may flourish on this barren hill,
Renown'd for science, commerce, wealth, and skill!

Here shall some pastor, learned, good, and just,
In solemn pause, resign the dust to dust,—

Perform each office with a pious care,
And cheer the wretched sinking in despair.

The bride, with modest blushes on her face,
Shall lightly tread across the hallow'd place,
So fill'd with joy when to the altar led,
Joy mix'd with fear,—a momentary dread !
Here will the pious sons and daughters mourn,
As slowly from a parent's tomb they turn ;
Here shall the tuneful youths, the virgin train,
Join with the organ in a holy strain,
Touch'd by the sweet expressive warbling trills,
Which give the undescrib'd cold shiv'ring thrills,
Such as to those with feeling minds are giv'n,
Which charm the soul and lift it up to heav'n.

But diff'rent sects in time may yet arise,—
The present doctrines of the Church despise :
A future reformation yet may come,
And o'er our bless'd religion cast a gloom.
Such great mutations have all earthly things—
How oft have creeds been chang'd by diff'rent kings !
The future generations yet may hope
For heav'nly bliss thro' pardons from the Pope.
The cross, the holy water, and the shrine,
Of some fam'd saint may yet be thought divine !
But whatsoever doctrine here is giv'n,
May each succeeding pastor teach the way to heav'n !

THE MUSE.

WHAT means it tho' the poet's cot
 Be plac'd in some sequester'd spot?
 Where oaks, and elms, and beeches grow,
 Or on the heath, where rushes bow;
 In vales, where peaceful graze the flocks,
 Or near the mossy-vestur'd rocks.
 Romantic scenes can ne'er indite,
 Nor situations make him write.
 'Tis genius must his breast inspire,
 And light the true poetic fire.
 Without it he may read and pore
 Ancient and modern classics o'er;
 May walk in ruins late or soon,
 While thro' the arches shines the moon,
 Where sleeps the abbot, monk, or friar,
 But if he has not Nature's lyre,
 Nor ancient ruins, nor the woods,
 The rippling rills, the foaming floods,
 Embattled fields, nor ancient hall,
 Romantic scenes, where cataracts fall,
 Nor works of other authors' pens,
 Nor Cumbria's lakes, nor Highland glens,
 Nor all the scenes which ever grac'd
 The paintings of a man of taste,
 Not all the arts the scribblers use,
 Can make a bard without the Muse.

ON THE ASCENT OF A BALLOON.

THE air balloon a picture is
 Of man's most elevated bliss.
 As on the wings of hope he hastes,
 He finds all earthly pleasure wastes.
 The sweetest bliss that man enjoys
 In its possession only cloy's ;
 Tho' with good fortune for his gas
 He o'er the clouds of want may pass,
 Yet come a storm, the weaken'd air
 May drop him on a sea of care.

Th' enthusiasts who soar on high,
 And seem as if they'd grasp the sky,
 With reason weak, and fancy strong,
 Think all the sects but theirs are wrong ;
 Condemn all creeds, and think that they
 Alone are heirs of endless day.
 They cling around their car of hopes,
 Till demon Nature cuts the ropes,
 As thro' this evil world they pass,
 And fierce temptations waste their gas.

They downward fall—the phantom vain
Comes rapid to the earth again ;
And when they gather breath to speak,
They own they are but mortals weak.

The playful boy, when young his hope,
First forms his weak balloon with soap ;
With joy bright glitt'ring in his eyes,
He views it from the tube arise,
Dances and laughs to see it soar
With Nature's colours painted o'er :
Thus miniature balloons of boys
Are emblems true of riper joys.

The gay coquette, whose thoughts despise
The sober youth, tho' e'er so wise,
Becomes a spendthrift's mistress soon,
And soars aloft in love's balloon.
Thro' all the gayest scenes they pass,—
Her marriage portion is the gas
That bears them in the circle gay,
And turns the midnight into day.
But after all these golden hours,
They find the air-borne chariot low'rs ;
Their lofty flight they then repent,
For friends all fly from their descent,
And those who envied them before,
Rejoice to see their flying o'er.

The dashing youth, who sports along,
Amid the wine, the dance, the song,
The opera, the park, the ball,
At Covent-Garden and Vauxhall,
Upon the turf, or at the ring,
With gold enough, is just the thing.
High in the atmosphere of pride
In his balloon he loves to ride ;
While round his car the nymphs attend,
His ample fortune help to spend.
For ballast he no reason takes,
Till debts increas'd the phantom shakes ;
He falls, amid the gloomy cloud
Of creditors, and cries aloud,—
“ Could I but live past moments o'er,
“ Folly's balloon I'd mount no more !”

The tyrant, in his horrid car,
Hung round with implements of war,
While on its edge sits rage and death,
And murder'd myriads are beneath,
Elately rides,—his flags unfurl'd,
And waving o'er a prostrate world.
The ruin'd empires see him pass,
Pride and ambition for his gas ;
Despair below looks wildly up,
And frantic drinks the pois'nous cup ;

Orphans and widows curse his flight,
And Mercy, weeping, shuns the sight !
When he to loftier heights would soar,
His ballast is the warrior's gore,
Which from his car the monster throws,
And sprinkles on the field of woes.
But He who rules above, looks down,—
His lightnings blaze—the tyrants crown
Drops from his head,—his mighty car
Is broke upon the field of war !
The wounded warriors join with all
In joy to shout the tyrant's fall.

The humble poet, oft, alas !
Fills his balloon with fancy's gas ;
To see him launch it few attend,
He just is aided by one friend,
Who finds him ballast, silk, and ropes,
And keeps alive his trembling hopes ;
Then loos'd from earth and anxious care,
Aloft he springs upon the air ;
With lofty themes his passions glow,
The sordid world he views below ;
Thro' clouds he soars, and thinks he hears
The heav'nly chorus of the spheres.
He looks behind,—his fancy views
Close to his ear, the Tragic Muse ;

And, as in air he rides along
She charms him with her solemn song.
Her car's adorn'd with sword and spear,
The dagger and the scimitar ;
The pois'nous goblet,—broken crown,
And palaces half tumbled down.—
The bloody vest, the murder'd maid,
Are on the Muse's car pourtray'd.
The wide-stretch'd scene is spread below,
Where rich meand'ring rivers flow ;
The flow'ry fields, the foaming seas,
The mountains topp'd with waving trees ;
The dancing nymphs, the sportive swains,
And crippled age, oppress'd with pains.—
Time present, past, and future, lies
All spread before his fancy's eyes ;
While his enraptur'd passions glow,
His lines in easy accents flow :
But humble bards must soon descend,
And in the shades their raptures end.

SPORTS OF THE FIELD.

WHEN oaks are brown and birches bare,
And not a bird is singing,
The sportsman drives away his care,
The speckled woodcocks springing.

True joy he in the country knows,
His faithful springers ranging
Among the hazel's yellow boughs,
Or holly, never changing.

When the long-bill'd woodcock springs,
Mark !—the sportsman calling,
The blue smoke curls,—its useless wings
Through the trees are falling.

There's many a man at this would sigh,
As sore against religion ;
But at a feast just let him try
At woodcock, grouse, or widgeon.

A NIGHT SCENE.

WHILE others love the concert, mask, or ball,
 And walk in grandeur thro' the gazing crowd,
 I'll seek the spot where bursting cataracts fall,
 And o'er my head the tempest roars aloud,
 While the deep dark abyss is murmur'ing hoarse,
 That the swoll'n stream comes rushing with such force.

There, when the moon's broad orb is glimmering seen
 Just rising in the orient atmosphere,
 And trembling leaves but thinly intervene,
 And night in all its glories doth appear,—
 Pensive I'll walk, to study nature o'er,
 And on the wings of meditation soar;—

Listen the treble rills, with tinklings sweet,
 Ring on the cavern's ancient rocky side;
 Behold them with the larger current meet,
 Whose tenor murmurs on the stony tide;
 While in majestic bass the cataract roars,
 Like the deep notes of ocean on its shores!

Such are the concerts that my soul admires ;
These I can hear with feelings of delight !
A solemn awe my thoughtful breast inspires,
When heav'n is deck'd by the great jeweller, Night !
'Tis then my thoughts, on fancy's airy road,
Soar far, and ask—"Where dwells great Nature's God ?"

The shining orbs responsive answer—"Here !"
The twinkling glow-worms say by Him they shine !
The loud abyss deep murmurs, He is there !
And ev'ry object shows a Pow'r Divine !
Nature proclaims Him there, in ev'ry part,
And conscience whispers—He can read my heart !

THE MALT-KILN FIRE.

WHEN friends who lov'd from infant years,
Whose friendship ne'er went wrong,
Are met to tell their joys and cares,
Or join the cheerful song,

What bard but to the utmost height
Would string the rustic lyre,
When friends and home-brew'd drink are met
Around the Malt-kiln fire ?

Sometimes we're faring low at home,
Then feasting with a squire ;
But we've as much as we can wish
Around the Malt-kiln fire.

From this warm, happy, cheerful place,
Old Sorrow must retire,
And nought but joy dare shew her face
Around the Malt-kiln fire.

We talk of friends we long have known,
Some fall'n, and some ris'n higher ;
Happy as monarchs on the throne,
Around the Malt-kiln fire.

What means our food ? we pass away—
Of life begin to tire ;
But never was a mournful day
Around the Malt-kiln fire.

With snuff, tobacco, and a pipe,
And all we can desire,
Old Care's forgot, and pleasure shines
Around the Malt-kiln fire.

No wife to scold, none to intrude,
We laugh until we tire ;
With good strong drink as e'er was brew'd,
Around the Malt-kiln fire.

Let blackguards swear, and rage, and fight,
And scuffle in the mire ;
No angry word, for all is right,
Around the Malt-kiln fire

Had we but spent more evenings there,
Our spirits had been higher,
And drunk less brandy, and more beer
Around the Malt-kiln fire.

THE SNOWDROP.

PRETTY little modest gem,
First in Nature's diadem,
Press'd with snow, the first to rise,
Pure as stars that deck the skies.

With thy crown of purest white,
As the snow that falls by night,
Bending down thy modest head,
Frost thy pillow, snow thy bed.

'Mid the hail, the sleet, the frost,
In the snow-storm sometimes lost ;
But thy beauteous head appears
Lovelier with its icy tears.

So the lovely modest fair
Braves the storm with truth and care,
Tho' not like the roses drest,
Virtue blossoms in her breast,

Brighter than the brightest star,
Seen to glitter from afar :
Guilt can never hang on thee ;
Truth lives through eternity.

He that made the snowdrop knows
When the storm of sorrow blows ;
And with all his mighty care,
Will protect the virtuous fair.

THE DRUNKARD'S RETRIBUTION.

WHERE is the ink so sable in its hue,
 That can pourtray the picture dark and true :
 The horrid state which language fails to tell,
 The dark confusion, and the earthly hell !
 In such sad state how often have I thought—
 O ! that I could sink backward into nought ;
 Reason subverted, anguish took its place,
 I thought myself below the reach of grace.
 Despair o'erwhelm'd my soul, and keen remorse ;
 To know I liv'd, became my bitterest curse ;
 My sorrowing friends appear'd my greatest foes,
 And cheerful songs but added to my woes.
 The phantom trumpets, the imagin'd band,
 Methought I heard, which summon'd me to stand
 High in the pillory—to meet disgrace ;—
 My trembling heart shrunk back from every face.
 Thus swiftly did imagination rove,
 Confusion from her throne my reason drove.

Afraid of poison from my mother's hand,
I durst not drink, suspicion fill'd my mind.
Each trembling leaf, if shaken by the blast,
Struck me with terror as I hurried past.
Myself the cause, I thought, of all the guilt
That fills the earth—of all the blood that 's spilt,—
That purest heaven would deign on earth to dwell,
Were I but hurried to the deepest hell.

THE
 VANITY OF HUMAN AFFAIRS.

THE horse, the ass, can crop the grass,
 And on the dewy mountains sleep,
 Then toil away the summer's day,
 Nor drop a tear,—they never weep.

No friends to turn, which make them mourn;
 No wants but Nature's hands supply;
 No souls of fire make these aspire
 Or labour after vanity.

When tempests rise, and all the skies
 Are shrouded in a stormy vest,
 Within the deep the fishes sleep,
 The thunders cannot them molest.

No silver there is counted dear,
 O'er rubies carelessly they glide;
 Though diamonds blaze, they never gaze
 On gems of wealth beneath the tide.

The feather'd fowls, devoid of souls,
Sing cheerful on the bending spray ;
And when oppress'd they go to rest,
Or fan the clouds and soar away.

In ignorance the rustics dance,
And laugh and sing devoid of care ;
Though sorrows come, there is no room
Within their breasts for dark despair.

But though the share of anxious care
Sinks deepest in the feeling breast ;
When raptures rise all sorrow flies,
And in my cot I then am blest.

The fighting hosts, the fancied ghosts,
And Nature in its every form ;
The storm at peace, or when the seas
Wave their white mantles to the storm ;

I see, tho' here, yet from my sphere
My spirit soars on rapture's wings ;
My harp I take, its chords awake,
And sweep the chorus o'er the strings.

MARY, I WILL THINK OF YOU.

WHEN upon the heather bloom
First appears the evening dew,
When the daisies close their eyes,
Mary, I will think of you.

When the woodland doves I hear,
On the budding birchen bough,
While the thrush is singing clear,
Mary, I will think of you.

When I hear the evening chime,
While soft echo answers true,
'Tho' at midnight's solemn time,
Mary, I will think of you.

When upon the orient skies,
Morning spreads her pinky hue,
When I wake, before I rise,
Mary, I will think of you.

When among the heather bells,
Rising up the wild curlew,
Where the wildest music swells,
Mary, I will think of you.

On the banks of Windermere,
Mid fair scenes for ever new,
Then I wish'd my Mary there,
Pleas'd with every changing view.

When my bark must leave the shore,
Yet, unchang'd, my heart is true ;
Singing to the well-tim'd oar,
I'll drop a tear, and think of you.

When my bark is far away,
Nought but seas and skies in view,
Ploughing thro' the wat'ry way,
Mary, I will think of you.

THE ABSENT LOVER.

In vain the youths and rosy maids
All wish me to be gay,
For health declines, and pleasure fades,
While Henry's far away.

The birds may strain their warbling throats
Upon the blossom'd spray,
But there's no music in their notes,
When Henry's far away.

The sweets of June, the hill, the dale,
With Nature's beauties gay,
Appear to me but winter pale,
When Henry's far away.

The evening moments creep but slow,
And dull 's the brightest day;
For none my anxious cares can know,
When Henry's far away.

My trembling harp no pleasure yields,
My hands forget to play ;
No joy at home, nor in the fields,
While Henry 's far away.

The hours which now I think my best,
I wish them not to stay ;
For nought on earth can make me rest,
While Henry 's far away.

Phaeton, cord afresh thy whip,
And on thy coursers lay,
To make them o'er the azure skip,
While Henry 's far away.

And Night, upon thy sable throne,
Be scarce an hour thy stay ;
But bid the weeks be swiftly gone,
While Henry 's far away.

Then, on the wings of rosy Health,
May he be swiftly borne ;
For more to me than worlds of wealth
Will be his blest return.

ODE TO LAURA.

SOFTLY sighing will I mourn

The beauteous blossom, nipp'd in spring,

Hang a chaplet on the urn

Of lovely Virtue's blossoming.

O'er her no praise shall marble bear,

Those pageants vain of solemn pride ;

Tho' all on earth I held most dear,

Forsook me when my Laura died.

Oh ! 'tis in vain—I'll cease to try

To write in characters my sorrow deep,

For could I write a river dry,

My eyes another sea could weep.

But words can never shew the worth

Of her who was too fair to stay,

Mourning on a joyless earth,

When fit for everlasting day.

ON A CALM SUMMER'S NIGHT.

THE night is calm, the cygnet's down
Scarcely skims the lake along ;
The throstle to the hazel 's flown,
To trill his evening song.

The curling woodbine now appears
More sweet than fragrant gems ;
The sky a robe of crimson wears,
The scale-clad beetle hums.

What pleasure, walking with my Jane,
Earth's truest, best delight,
Returning to embrace again,
And loath to bid good night.

ON

THE DEATH OF LADY RICKITTS.*

YE shining tears ! bright as the diamond's glow,
 Or sunbeams on the Alps' untrodden snow,—
 They fall for one whose beauty and whose worth
 Exceeded all I ever knew on earth.
 In vain this mind, which heard her strike the strings,
 Darts thro' the skies as on a seraph's wings ;
 Then to the marble which in silence stands ;
 Then to the harp that trembled to her hands ;
 Then to her tomb, where all that art can give,
 Stands in pure love to make her mem'ry live.
 In vain from orb to orb this spirit flies,
 She shines to far beyond the furthest skies :
 The awful bourn of death my friend hath past,
 And rests beyond dark sorrow's keenest blast ;
 She views no more the changing scenes of earth,—
 She only liv'd to give a cherub birth,
 Then flew away to heaven's most blest abode,
 " To rest upon the bosom of her God."

* Daughter of COL. TEMPEST, of Tong Hall, and Wife of
 SIR CORNWALLIS RICKITTS.

A FRAGMENT.

Nor Skiddaw's top, nor great Helvellyn's height,
 Shew greater grandeur to the ravish'd sight,
 Than is upon the crown of Rom'lies' Moor,
 Where the wide scene is stretch'd to either shore.
 There we behold the hills of many a shire ;
 The lofty mountains to the clouds aspire ;
 Whernside uprears on high his snow-clad crest,
 While the blue Pendle rises in the west ;
 The hills of Derbyshire are southward seen,
 Tho' vales divide, and rivers roll between ;
 Old Ingleborough shews his time-worn head,
 And Yorkshire as one spacious map is spread ;
 Old Ebor's tow'rs and its rich vale appear ;
 The Cleveland hills their broad blue tops uprear ;
 Leeds, wrapt in smoke, unto the eastern lies ;
 But here the air 's untainted as the skies.
 Far from the noise of all created things,
 No sound is heard but from the moorcock's wings ;
 The pomp of human greatness here is lost,
 Or falls, like mites beneath the winter's frost.
 A scene like this within old England's coast,
 Nor Matlock, Buxton, nor proud Bath can boast.

THE POET'S SICK BED.

How little looks the world to him in pain,
Whose whole estate is sorrow's darkest train,
With mind in ruins, and his soul o'erthrown,
When friends retire as though they were not known.

How deep the anguish when his genius wastes,
As early, trembling, to the grave he hastes ;
With quiv'ring pulse—an appetite destroy'd—
All pleasure fled which once he most enjoy'd.

The stars no pleasure give, no orb on high
Inspires his soul with highest ecstacy ;
The vast unfathom'd sea he views no more,
The heav'ns' beauty in his bosom's o'er.

With landscapes, rocks, and hills, he so much lov'd,
His trembling anxious bosom is not mov'd ;
His unsubstantial friends, who once were sweet,
The lonely bard now tread beneath their feet.

THE BIBLE.

OF all the various volumes in the land—
In ev'ry language—by whomever plann'd—
However great or wise the author be—
However penn'd—GREAT BOOK ! there's none like thee.
There the sublime, with majesty and awe,
Pours forth the dreadful thunders of the law ;
And there the songs the mighty Prophets sung,
The masterpieces of both mind and tongue,
Transcend the reach of any other pen.—
As farthest stars are lost to human ken.

TO THE CRITICS.

SAT down by my wee rusted lyre,
And musing which way to get thro',
Ye quenchers of poets' best fire,
How oft have I trembled at you !

The vulture may seize the young lamb,
The raven may torture the dove,
And critics may tell what I am,
But O let your censures be love !

Ye weighers of man's little wit,
Which comes in a book to your eye,
Like spiders on cobwebs you sit,
To mangle and murder a fly.

Write your praise or dispraise for the great,
And rail on the muse of a lord,
Shoot at those who are laughing at fate,
And strike with your fame-killing sword.

But come to my cottage, and view
What feathers I have for my wings,
And then you will own there are few
In my station durst strike at the strings.

I gaze on my children asleep,
Assur'd that their lot is but hard ;
Yes, while I write verses I weep,
When I think their best friend is the bard.

NOTES.

ON AIREDALE.

PAGE 1, LINE 14.

To sing of Gordale—its tremendous source.

“The approach to Gordale, on the east side of the village of Malham, is through a stony and desolate valley, without a single object to divert the attention from the stupendous scene before it. Gordale is one solid mass of limestone rock, nearly of equal height with Malham Cove, cleft asunder by some great convulsion of nature, and opening its ‘stony jaws’ on the right and left. The sensation of horror is increased by the projection of either side from its base, so that the stupendous rocks admit only a narrow line of daylight from above.” But to attempt a description of this romantic place would be presumption; for, after all that can possibly be said, Gordale must be seen to be conceived. “Bishop Pococke, who had seen all that was great and terrible in the rocks of Judea and Arabia, declared he had never seen any place comparable to Gordale.”

PAGE 3, LINE 2.

Stands, rudely great, old Malham’s lofty Cove.

“The Cove is an immense assemblage of rocks, 268 feet in height, stretched in the shape of the segment of a circle across the whole valley, and forming a termi-

nation at once so august and tremendous, that the imagination can scarcely figure to itself any form or scale of rocks, within the bounds of probability, that can go beyond it. In rainy seasons, the overflowings of the Tarn are precipitated from the summit of the Cove in one of the most supendous cataracts that can be conceived."

PAGE 3, LINE 5.

*Here the brave Percies, foremost in the chase,
Were follow'd by the sons of Clifford's race;
Listers and Tempests, on the jocund morn,
Obey'd the cheerful summons of the horn:
Malhams and Martons, on their hunters' fleet,
Scatter'd the moorland moss beneath their feet.*

The Knights of Craven were undoubtedly brave, bold, and resolute followers of the chase; they not only had the fox and hare, but the wolf and wild boar were not extinct in Craven at the commencement of the 14th century. A hunter, together with hounds, were kept at Bolton. The Knights of Craven, from the 12th to the 15th centuries, were Tempest, Hammerton, Pudsay, Lister, Marton. Malham, Hebden, Hartlington, Rilston, Middleton, and Eshton; and imagination sees them and their sons pursuing the chase with many of the illustrious Cliffords.

PAGE 3, LINE 25.

*As when the sons of Gargrave sallied forth
To meet the fierce invaders from the north.*

"After the fatal battle of Bannockburn, the Scots overran the North of England; and Craven, abounding with cattle, was oft the scene of their depredations. In the year 1316, and three or four following ones, they often repeated their unwelcome visits. In 1320, they so completely ruined the Priory of Bolton, that the prior and canons dispersed. The next year, these

marauders paid a third visit, when the moveables of Bolton were carried to Skipton Castle. In one of these invasions, the men of Gargrave, near Skipton, met a party of the plunderers, on the north-west side of Coniston Moor, at a place called Sweet-Gap, and were almost cut off to a man."

PAGE 4, LINE 3.

Death thro' Northumbria's fields had mark'd their way.

"In the year 1138, while David, king of Scotland, was engaged in the siege of Norham, he detached the Piets, and part of the Scottish army, under the command of William, son of Duncan, his nephew, into Yorkshire. There they laid waste the possessions of a celebrated monastery, and the province called Craffna, (now Craven,) with fire and sword. In this work of devastation, no rank, nor age, nor sex was spared. Children were butchered before the face of their parents, husbands in sight of their wives, and wives in the presence of their husbands; matrons and virgins of rank were carried away indiscriminately with other plunder; they were stripped, bound together with ropes, and goaded along like cattle, with the points of swords and lances."

PAGE 4, LINE 6.

Their dwellings plunder'd, and their churches fir'd.

"Not content with plunder and death, the Scots set fire to their churches, though they had dearly paid for their depredations at the Battle of the Standard, fought near North-Allerton, Yorkshire: at which place, David, king of Scots, was completely routed. The real Standard was there displayed.—This was a huge chariot upon wheels, with a mast of prodigious height fixed in it, on the top of which was a cross, and underneath a banner. This was a signal used only in the greatest expeditions, and was looked upon as a sacred altar."

PAGE 5, LINE 24.

Led to the altar Cicily the fair.

The fee of Skipton before the Conquest, was the property of the Earl Edwin, the son of Leofwine, and brother of Leofric, earls of Mercia. After Edwin had forfeited the estates, the family became possessed of them again, by the marriage of Wm. de Meschinés with Cicily de Romili. The history of the Romilis, their founding Bolton Priory, and the untimely fate of the boy of Egremont, are so well known that they need not be copied here.—*See Dr. Whitaker's History of Craven.*

PAGE 6, LINE 9.

*Banners, which war'd when shields and helmets rung,
Were all to Skipton brought, and safely hung
High in the tow'r.—*

It was customary, in the days of chivalry, to deposit shields, banners, helmets, &c., in the strong towers of castles.

PAGE 6, LINE 16.

And silver'd robes the ancient Cliffords wore.

For an account of the splendour of the dresses of the Cliffords, see Dr. Whitaker's Hist. Craven, p. 291, et seq.

PAGE 6, LINE 21.

Upon each dish the dragon was pourtray'd.

See the valuation of the plate at Skipton Castle, in Dr. Whitaker's Craven, from which the following is an extract:—

“Item, XX silver plates, some with dragons, and the rest with lyberds' heads. One standyng cup, with a like image of a boy standing upon three eagles.” There were likewise other pieces of plate, with the portcullis, &c., engraven upon them, of which we can now form no conception.

PAGE 8, LINE 4.

The valley shone in robes of golden hue.

The wild ranunculus grows in such profusion in the valley above and below Skipton, that it appears clothed in a beautiful robe of yellow during the months of May and June.

PAGE 15, LINE 17.

*Where winding Aire, enamour'd of the place,
Moves on so slow, it seems to stop and gaze.*

The fall in the course of the Aire, from Gargrave to Bingley, is so little, that the river seems to labour with difficulty in pursuing its course: in many places creeping slowly in the opposite direction, as if it wished to return to its source. This has a very beautiful effect in a morning or evening, when the rays of the sun are thrown upon it. The resplendent reflections are seen in a variety of points, so as to make the valley appear as though it was filled with various small lakes.

PAGE 16, LINE 6.

There once a castle stood, tho' lost to fame.

Dodsworth, who visited Bingley in 1621, says there was a park there, and a castle on a hill, called Bailey-Hill, of which nothing more than the name and tradition now remain.

PAGE 16, LINE 16.

Since on its banks the ancient Druids rang'd.

To give the history of the Druids would swell the volume beyond its intended limits, and only be superfluous. They had, undoubtedly, an altar west of Bingley. The rocks which still retain the name of "The Altar," situated upon a lofty eminence, deeply marked with the fire of sacrifice; the beautiful valley beneath,

favourable to the growth of the oak, and eligible for their sacred groves, place it beyond all doubt that the valley of Bingley was once the residence of the ancient priests of the Britons.—For full particulars respecting the Druids, see Toland's History of the Druids, and the notes to Mallet's Northern Antiquities.

PAGE 16, LINE 17.

The fords, which once the Roman cohorts cross'd.

These must have been, according to the line of the Roman road from Olicano to Mancunium, (Ilkley and Manchester of the present day,) between Riddlesden Hall and Marley, in the parish of Bingley; as the two remaining fragments, one on Romili's Moor, and the other near Cullingworth, are in that direction. Portions of Roman strata are only to be found on the uncultivated wastes; they are long since destroyed in the inclosures.

PAGE 18, LINE 12.

As tho' a far more dulcet peal was there.

Few peals in the West-Riding of Yorkshire are placed among so many different points of echo as that of Bingley. A stranger, not seeing the tower of the church, would often be at a loss to know from whence the sounds proceeded.

PAGE 19, LINE 9.

*Your fathers met their Maker to adore,
Devoutly read the Vulgate verses o'er,
And from the priest, words of affection flow'd—
He pray'd, he wept—until the list'ning crowd
Melted to tears; and tears that were not feign'd,
Like crystal drops, from all the audience rain'd.*

As an instance of the exceeding humility and unfeigned piety of some of the abbots of Kirkstall in

the 13th century, I here insert a copy of a letter, written by John de Birdsall, abbot, to the prior and convent of the monastery of Kirkstall, about the year 1300, from Dr. Whitaker's History of Craven.—

“To his reverend brethren, the prior and convent of the monastery of Kirkstall, John, styled abbot of the same, wishes health and grace, and that they may labour more earnestly after the things which concern religion, peace, and charity.

“Beloved, we have written this letter in haste from Canterbury, knowing that an account of the success of our journey will be pleasing to you.

“In the first place, our dear brother, who was present, will inform you, that on the morrow of St. Lawrence we were met by letters from the King, in a very threatening style; that we were apprized of robbers who laid wait for us in the woods, under a rock; and that we were bound, under the penalty of forfeiting all our goods, to abide the king's pleasure. However, having been at length dismissed from his presence with honour, we proceeded on our way, and, notwithstanding the delay in London, arrived at Canterbury on Monday evening, ourselves, our servants, and horses, being all well. We are not without hope, therefore, that our feeble beginnings will be followed by better fortune. On Wednesday morning, the wind blowing fair, we put the horses on board a ship * * * * *

“For the time to come we commend you, dear brethren, to God, and our bodily safety to your prayers. But especially pray for the salvation of our soul; for we are not greatly solicitous if this earthly part of us be delivered into the hand of the wicked one, so that the spirit be saved in the day of the Lord, which we hope for, through the assistance of your intercessions: yet we should wish, if it be the will of God, to be committed to the earth by your hands, wherever you shall dispose.

“But know assuredly, that, if we return, whosoever appears to have been most humble in conversation, and

active in business, during our absence, shall receive an ample measure of grace and recompence from God, and shall every hour be more affectionately regarded by us.

"We entreat and enjoin brother R. Eckisley to prepare himself for the duty of preaching on the Nativity of our Lord, unless we return in the mean time, that so great a festival may not pass without a sermon, a thing which hath never yet happened, nor, by the grace of God, ever shall do.

"We wrote unto certain persons, 'abstain from every appearance of evil, and avoid it beforehand, whatever is, or can be pretended in its behalf.'

"God shall give you the knowledge of these things.

"We adjure you, brethren, by the bowels of mercy in Jesus Christ, that, if ye hear of our departure, ye will pray for us faithfully, remembering the labours and distresses which we have endured in the beginning of our creation, and of which ye are now reaping the fruits in peace.

"We know, dearly beloved, that worldly occupations, such as we have long been entangled in for your sakes, are not without danger to the soul. But we derive great hopes from your compassion, seeing that we aim at no earthly advantage, nor consume the revenues of the monastery without cause.

"Salute our dear friends: * * * * * and especially our dearest companion,* to whom we would have some one interpret this letter. When he hears it, he will scarcely be able to refrain from tears, which he shed abundantly at our parting.

"We commend our poor mother to your compassion.

"The salutation of me, John, your minister, such as I am, and studying to do every thing in my power for your advantage and honour.

"We commend you again and again to God and the B. V.

"*Written at Canterbury with many tears.*"

* Some illiterate but affectionate friend whom he does not name.

PAGE 21, LINE 21.

*And slowly as their clouds of incense roll,
The fragrant grateful scent perfumes the whole.*

“The use of perfumes,” says Dr. Whitaker, “is a pleasing and elegant part of the Catholic ritual; which if it could be adopted in our congregations, without offending the bigotry of Puritanism, might have a pleasing and wholesome effect in correcting the effluvia arising from crowded congregations.

“The power of show in religion, the pomp and pageantry of the Romish church, steal insensibly upon the imagination, in defiance of enlightened reason and Protestant principle! How easy then must it have been to bribe the senses of rustics, who saw no other splendid scenes but those of earth and heaven, heard little music but that of birds, and inhaled no other perfumes than those of the field, especially when it is considered that natural charms can only be enjoyed by cultivated minds, while the artificial and gorgeous strike with greater force upon the rudest.”

It is stated that Lord Bolingbroke, in defiance of his infidelity, was highly affected by attending high mass.

PAGE 21, LINE 25.

*Beholds the abbot in his robes array'd,
The altar wet, where once Turgesius pray'd.*

Turgesius was the fourth abbot of Kirkstall. He was a severe chastiser of his body; constantly clad in hair cloth, and frequently repeating to himself, “Those who are clothed in soft raiment are in kings’ houses.” His clothing was alike in all seasons, being only a tunic and a cowl. His body was so habituated to this discipline, that he appeared equally insensible to the heat of the dog-days and the cold of January. In the severest

weather, he endured the night-watches without shoes; and when his well-clad brethren were almost stiff with frost, he gave himself to the praises of God, and repelled the cold without by the heat of devotion within. Yet none was more mild and affable than Turgesius. His abstinence was extreme. He never tasted wine nor flesh. Fish he permitted to be set before him for his friends, not for himself. His compunctions knew no bounds; in common conversation he scarcely refrained from weeping. At the altar, he never celebrated without such a profusion of tears, that his eyes might be said rather to rain than weep; insomuch, that the sacerdotal vestment he officiated in could not be used until it was dried. After nine years' presidency, he retired to Fountains' Abbey, where he died.

PAGE 22, LINE 25.

When ancient records, kept with pious care.

Had it not been for the religious houses, what would have become of the works of antiquity, or even of the Scriptures themselves? Had they been in the hands of the illiterate in the dark ages, scarce a line of the Greek and Roman authors would have been now beheld; and no doubt a great many valuable works were destroyed at the dissolution of the religious houses in this district.

PAGE 25, LINE 13.

*When Towton's plain
Was crimson'd o'er with thirty thousand slain.*

“The true English Pharsalia was between Caxton and Towton. Here was the greatest engagement, and the strongest army that was ever seen in England; no fewer than one hundred thousand men, under the command of two daring and furious generals, engaged here

on Palm Sunday, in the year 1461. The victory continued for a long time doubtful, but at last the Lancastrians proved the weakest by being too strong, for their numbers proved cumbersome and unwieldy, which first caused disorder and then flight; the York party pursuing them. The fight was so bloody that 36,000 men were cut off, among whom were a great many of the nobility."

ON THE POACHER.

PAGE 27, LINE 3.

*They act such deeds as make e'en barons swear,
Break down their fine park walls and take the deer.*

The poachers in the southern parts of Craven, a few centuries ago, seem not to have meddled with the hare, pheasant, grouse, &c., but to have stolen the deer out of the parks, and nothing seems to have given the lords greater offence.

PAGE 28, LINE 10.

A better workman seldom took the field.

Whether as husbandmen, or employed in manufactures, there are few better or abler workmen than poachers, who are used to hardships and great bodily exertion, and can perform their labour with the greatest expedition.

PAGE 38, LINE 12.

*How oft have I, with exultation great,
Stood list'ning to the singing of his feet.*

Some dogs never bark when in pursuit of game, and can only be heard by the noise which they make with running, styled by poachers, "Singing at the feet."

PAGE 39, LINE 19.

*Not to the ale-house did the group retire,
But drank and smok'd around the poacher's fire.*

It is well known that there are two distinct classes of poachers, one of a desperate description, who, having been fined or imprisoned several times, are determined to be revenged, knowing that if they again be taken, they need not expect anything else but a heavier penalty or a longer imprisonment. The other class are those who are afraid of every bush, and will fly even at their own shadow. These, in general, commit their depredations in their own neighbourhood; while the other range perhaps in a circuit of twenty miles,—to whom rivers are no obstacle, nor are they hindered by the most stormy nights; they can obtain game in such quantities, that they have sometimes even a superfluity of money, which they spend in the poacher's lonely cot. It not unfrequently happens, that to make money, the veteran poachers sell their tackling to the junior ones, at much above what it really cost, and, in the character of game-keepers, take it from them the next night.

PAGE 43, LINE 9.

*Here stands the tree to which the cord is tied,
And there my game across the river ride,
Then I the bridge securely travel o'er,
And none take oath that murder'd game I bore.*

Suppose three are in a gang, who are going into a gentleman's grounds, between them and which there

is a river which cannot be forded, and they have to pass over a bridge which is guarded. Being provided with a large oil-case, and a string which will go three times over the river, they tie a leaden ball to the end of it, and throw it over the stream. Their implements are then put into the oil-case, and fastened to the cord, while one goes over the bridge, to the place where the ball is thrown, and draws the oil-case over, containing shot, powder, nets, &c., which, by this means, are all kept perfectly dry. In the same manner is all the game they get drawn over, though the river should be swollen to a great degree. In passing the bridge, should they be searched, nothing suspicious is found upon them.

ON THE OLD OAK TREE.

PAGE 128, LINE 12.

And kept the tree while Bradford keeps its crest.

There is a tradition, that, some centuries ago, the wood which then surrounded the church at Bradford, was infested with a furious wild boar, which was the terror of the neighbourhood. A reward was offered by government for the head or tongue of this animal; and it is asserted that it was shot while in the act of drinking at a well near an oak tree, which was, not long since, standing. The hero who accomplished the

feat, stationed himself behind this identical tree,—and as soon as he had despatched the monster, he proceeded to cut out its tongue, with which he hastened to receive the reward. In the mean time, the animal was found dead by another person, who immediately cut off its head, and would have succeeded in obtaining the reward, had not the hero who actually killed the animal arrived with its tongue. From this circumstance it is supposed the arms of Bradford originated, the crest of which is a boar's head.—*See James's History of Bradford.*

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
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